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TOMMY AND GRIZEL

By

JAMES M. BARRIE

CHAPTERS I-X.



CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS, PUBLISHERS

153-157 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

TWO-CHEST-FOLDING
BY THE
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35
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TOMMY AND GRIZEL

BY J. M. BARRIE

Author of "Sentimental Tommy," "The Little Minister," etc.

CHAPTER I

HOW TOMMY FOUND A WAY



O. P. PYM, the colossal Pym, that vast and rolling figure, who never knew what he was to write about until he dipped grandly, an author in such demand that on the foggy evening which starts our story his publishers have had his boots removed lest he slip thoughtlessly round the corner before his work is done, as was the great man's way—shall we begin with him or with Tommy, who has just arrived in London carrying his little box and leading a lady by the hand? It was Pym, as we are about to see, who in the beginning held Tommy up to the public gaze, Pym who first noticed his remarkable indifference to female society, Pym who gave him——. But, alack, does no one remember Pym for himself; is the king of the "Penny Number" already no more than a button that once upon a time kept Tommy's person together? And we are at the night when they first met! Let us hasten into Marylebone, before little Tommy arrives and Pym is swallowed like an oyster. This is the house, 22 Little Owlet Street, Marylebone, but which were his rooms it is less easy to determine, for he was a lodger who flitted placidly from floor to floor according to the state of his finances, carrying his apparel and other belongings in one great armful and spilling by the way. On this particular evening he was on the second floor front, which had a fire-place in the corner, furniture all his landlady's and mostly horse-hair, little to suggest his calling save a noble saucerful of ink, and nothing to draw attention from Pym, who lolled, gross and massive, on a sofa, one

leg over the back of it, the other drooping, his arms extended and his pipe, which he could find nowhere, thrust between the buttons of his waistcoat, an agreeable pipe-rack. He wore a yellow dressing-gown, or could scarcely be said to wear it, for such of it as was not round his neck he had converted into a cushion for his head, which is perhaps the part of him we should have turned to first. It was a big round head, the plentiful gray hair in tangles, possibly because in Pym's last flitting the comb had dropped over the banisters, the features ugly and beyond life-size, yet the forehead had altered little except in color since the day when he was near being made a fellow of his college; there was sensitiveness left in the thick nose, humor in the eyes, though they so often watered, the face had gone to flabbiness at last, but not without some lines and dents, as if the head had resisted the body for a space before the whole man rolled contentedly down hill.

He had no beard. "Young man, let your beard grow." Those who have forgotten all else about Pym may recall him in these words; they were his one counsel to literary aspirants, who, according as they took it, are now bearded and prosperous or shaven and on the rates. To shave costs threepence, another threepence for loss of time, nearly ten pounds a year, three hundred pounds since Pym's chin first bristled. With his beard he could have bought an annuity or a cottage in the country, he could have had a wife and children and driven his dog-cart and been made a church-warden. All gone, all shaved, and for what? When he asked this question he would move his hand across his chin with a sigh, and so, bravely to the barber's.

Pym was at present suffering from an ailment that had spread him out on that

L. of G.

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sofa again and again, acute disinclination to work.

Meanwhile all the world was waiting for his new tale. So the publishers, two little round men, have told him. They have blustered, they have fawned, they have asked each other out to talk it over behind the door.

Has he any idea of what the story is to be about?

He has no idea.

Then at least, Pym, excellent Pym, sit down and dip, and let us see what will happen.

He declined to do even that. While all the world waited, this was Pym's ultimatum :

"I shall begin the damned thing at eight o'clock."

Outside, the fog kept changing at intervals from black to white, as lazily from white to black (the monster blinking), there was not a sound from the street save of pedestrians tapping with their sticks on the pavement as they moved forward warily, afraid of an embrace with the unknown ; it might have been a city of blind beggars, one of them a boy.

At eight o'clock Pym rose with a groan and sat down in his stocking soles to write his delicious tale. He was now alone. But though his legs were wound round his waste-paper basket, and he dipped often and loudly in the saucer like one ringing at the door of Fancy, he could not get the idea that would set him going. He was still dipping for inspiration when T. Sandys, who had been told to find the second floor for himself, knocked at the door and entered, quaking.

"I remember it vividly," Pym used to say when questioned in the after years about this, his first sight of Tommy, "and I hesitate to decide which impressed me more, the richness of his voice, so remarkable in a boy of sixteen, or his serene countenance with its noble forehead, behind which nothing base could lurk."

Pym, Pym! it is such as you that makes the writing of biography difficult. The richness of Tommy's voice could not have struck you, for at that time it was a somewhat squeaky voice, and as for the noble forehead behind which nothing base could lurk, how could you say that, Pym, you who had a noble forehead yourself?

No, all that Pym saw was a pasty-faced boy sixteen years old and of an appearance mysteriously plain ; hair light brown and waving defiance to the brush, nothing startling about him but the expression of his face, which was almost fearsomely solemn and apparently unchangeable ; he wore his Sunday blacks, of which the trousers might with advantage have borrowed from the sleeves, and he was so nervous that he had to wet his lips before he could speak. He had left the door ajar for a private reason, but Pym, misunderstanding, thought he did it to fly the more readily if anything was flung at him ; so he must be a printer's devil.

Pym had a voice that shook his mantel-piece ornaments ; he was all on the same scale as his ink-pot. "Your Christian name, boy?" he roared, hopefully, for it was thus he sometimes got the idea that started him.

"Thomas," replied the boy.

Pym gave him a look of disgust. "You may go," he said. But when he looked up presently, Thomas was still there. He was not only there but whistling, a short encouraging whistle that seemed to be directed at the door ; he stopped quickly when Pym looked up, but during the remainder of the interview he emitted this whistle at intervals, always with that anxious glance at his friend, the door, and its strained joviality was in odd contrast with his solemn face, like a cheery tune played on the church organ.

"Begone!" cried Pym.

"My full name," explained Tommy, who was speaking the English correctly, but with a Scot's accent, "is Thomas Sandys. And fine you know who that is," he added, exasperated by Pym's indifference, "I'm the T. Sandys that answered your advertisement."

Pym knew who he was now. "You young ruffian," he gasped, "I never dreamt that you would come!"

"I have your letter engaging me in my pocket," said Tommy, boldly, and he laid it on the table. Pym surveyed it and him in comic dismay, then with a sudden thought produced nearly a dozen letters from a drawer and planted them down beside the other. It was now his turn to look triumphant and Tommy aghast.

Pym's letters were all addressed from

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the Dubb of Prosen Farm, near Thrums, N. B., to different advertisers, care of a London agency, and were Tommy's answers to the "wants" in a London newspaper which had found its way to the far North. "XYZ" was in need of a chemist's assistant, and from his earliest years, said one of the letters, chemistry had been the study of studies for T. Sandys. He was glad to read, was T. Sandys, that one who did not object to long hours would be preferred, for it seemed to him that those who objected to long hours did not really love their work, their heart was not in it, and only where the heart is, can the treasure be found.

"123" had a vacancy for a page-boy; "Glasgow Man" for a photographer; page-boy must not be over fourteen, photographer must not be under twenty. "I am a little over fourteen, but I look less," wrote T. Sandys to "123"; "I am a little under twenty," he wrote to "Glasgow Man," "but I look more." His heart was in the work.

To be a political organizer! If "H and H," who advertised for one only knew how eagerly the undersigned desired to devote his life to political organizing!

In answer to "Scholastic's" advertisement for janitor in a boys' school, T. Sandys begged to submit his name for consideration.

Undoubtedly the noblest letter was the one applying for the secretaryship of a charitable society, salary to begin at once, but the candidate selected must deposit one hundred pounds. The application was noble in its offer to make the work a labor of love, and almost nobler in its argument that the hundred pounds was unnecessary.

"Rex" had a vacancy in his drapery department. T. Sandys had made a unique study of drapery.

Lastly "Anon" wanted an amanuensis. "Salary," said "Anon," who seemed to be a humorist, "salary large but uncertain." He added, with equal candor, "Drudgery great, but to an intelligent man the pickings may be considerable." Pickings! Is there a finer word in the language? T. Sandys had felt that he was particularly good at pickings. But amanuensis? The thing was unknown to him, no one on the farm could tell him what it was. But never mind. His heart was in it.

All this correspondence had produced one reply, the letter on which Tommy's hand still rested. It was a brief note, signed O. P. Pym, and engaging Mr. Sandys on his own recommendation "If he really felt quite certain that his heart (treasure included) was in the work." So far good, Tommy had thought when he received this answer, but there was nothing in it to indicate the nature of the work, nothing to show whether O. P. Pym was "Scholastic," or "123," or "Rex," or any other advertiser in particular. Stop, there was a postscript: "I need not go into details about your duties, as you assure me you are so well acquainted with them, but before you join me please send (in writing) a full statement of what you think they are."

There were delicate reasons why Mr. Sandys could not do that, but, oh, he was anxious to be done with farm labor, so he decided to pack and risk it. The letter said plainly that he was engaged; what for he must find out slyly when he came to London. So he had put his letter firmly on Pym's table, but it was a staggerer to find that gentleman in possession of the others.

One of these was Pym's by right, the remainder were a humorous gift from the agent who was accustomed to sift the correspondence of his clients. Pym had chuckled over them and written a reply that he flattered himself would stump the boy, then he had unexpectedly come into funds (he found a forgotten check while searching his old pockets for tobacco-crumbs), and in that glory T. Sandys escaped his memory. Result, that they were now face to face.

A tiny red spot, not noticeable before, now appeared in Tommy's eyes. It was never there except when he was determined to have his way. Pym, my friend, yes, and everyone of you who is destined to challenge Tommy, 'ware that red light.

"Well, which am I?" demanded Pym, almost amused, Tommy was so obviously in a struggle with the problem.

The saucer and the blank pages told nothing. "Whichever you are," the boy answered, heavily, "it's not herding nor foddering cattle, and so long as it's not that, I'll put my heart in it, and where the heart is, there the treasure——"

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He suddenly remembered that his host must be acquainted with the sentiment.

Easy-going Pym laughed, then said, irritably, "Of what use could a mere boy be to me?"

"Then it's not the page-boy!" exclaimed Tommy, thankfully.

"Perhaps I am 'Scholastic,'" suggested Pym.

"No," said Tommy, after a long study of his face.

Pym followed this reasoning, and said, touchily, "Many a schoolmaster has a red face."

"Not that kind of redness," explained Tommy, deliberately.

"I am 'H and H,'" said Pym.

"You forget you wrote to me as one person," replied Tommy.

"So I did. That was because I am the chemist, and I must ask you, Thomas, for your certificate." Tommy believed this time, and Pym triumphantly poured himself a glass of whiskey, spilling some of it on his dressing-gown.

"Not you," said Tommy, quickly, "a chemist has a steady hand."

"Confound you!" cried Pym, "what sort of a boy is this?"

"If you had been the draper you would have wiped the drink off your gown," continued Tommy, thoughtfully, "and if you had been 'Glasgow Man' you would have sucked it off, and if you had been the 'Charitable Society' you wouldn't swear in company." He flung out his hand. "I'll tell you who you are," he said, sternly, "you're 'Anon.'"

Under this broadside Pym succumbed. He sat down feebly. "Right," he said, with a humorous groan, "and I'll tell you who you are—I am afraid you are my amanuensis!"

Tommy immediately whistled, a louder and more glorious note than before.

"Don't be so cocky," cried Pym in sudden rebellion. "You are only my amanuensis if you can tell me what that is. If you can't—out you go."

He had him at last!

Not he!

"An amanuensis," said Tommy, calmly, "is one who writes to dictation. Am I to bring in my box? it's at the door."

This made Pym sit down again. "You didn't know what an amanuensis was

when you answered my advertisement," he said.

"As soon as I got to London," Tommy answered, "I went into a bookseller's shop pretending I wanted to buy a dictionary, and I looked the word up."

"Bring in your box," Pym said, with a groan.

But it was now Tommy's turn to hesitate. "Have you noticed," he asked, awkwardly, "that I sometimes whistle?"

"Don't tell me," said Pym, "that you have a dog out there."

"It's not a dog," Tommy replied, cautiously.

Pym had resumed his seat at the table and was once more toying with his pen. "Open the door," he commanded, "and let me see what you have brought with you."

Tommy obeyed gingerly, and then Pym gaped, for what the open door revealed to him was a tiny roped box, with a girl of twelve sitting on it. She was dressed in some dull-colored winsey, and looked cold and patient and lonely, and as she saw the big man staring at her she struggled in alarm to her feet and could scarce stand on them. Tommy was looking apprehensively from her to Pym.

"Good God, boy," roared Pym, "are you married?"

"No," cried Tommy in agony, "she's my sister, and we're orphans, and did you think I could have the heart to leave Elspeth behind?" He took her stoutly by the hand.

"And he never will marry," said little Elspeth, almost fiercely; "will you, Tommy?"

"Never!" said Tommy, patting her and glaring at Pym.

But Pym would not have it; "Married," he shouted, "magnificent!" and he dipped exultantly, for he had got his idea at last. Forgetting even that he had an amanuensis he wrote on and on and on.

"He smells o' drink," Elspeth whispered.

"All the better," replied Tommy, cheerily. "Make yourself at home, Elspeth, he's the kind I can manage. Was there ever a kind I couldna manage?" he whispered, top-heavy with conceit.

"There was Grizel," Elspeth said, rather thoughtlessly, and then Tommy frowned.

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CHAPTER II

THE SEARCH FOR THE TREASURE



IX years afterward Tommy was a famous man, as I hope you do not need to be told, but you may be wondering how it came about. The whole question, in Pym's words, resolves itself into how the solemn little devil got to know so much about women. It made the world marvel when they learned his age, but no one was quite so staggered as Pym, who had seen him daily for all those years, and been damning him for his indifference to the sex during the greater part of them.

It began while he was still no more than an amanuensis, sitting with his feet in the waste-paper basket, Pym dictating from the sofa and swearing when the words would not come unless he was perpendicular. Among the duties of this amanuensis was to remember the name of the heroine, her appearance and other personal details, for Pym constantly forgot them in the night, and he had to go searching back through his pages for them, cursing her so horribly that Tommy signed to Elspeth to retire to her tiny bedroom at the top of the house. He was always most careful of Elspeth, and with the first pound he earned he insured his life, leaving all to her, but told her nothing about it, lest she should think it meant his early death. As she grew older he also got good dull books for her from a library, and gave her a piano on the hire system and taught her many things about life, very carefully selected from his own discoveries.

Elspeth out of the way he could give Pym all the information wanted. "Her name is Felicity," he would say at the right moment, "she has curly brown hair in which the sun strays and a blushing neck, and her eyes are like blue lakes."

"Height," roared Pym, "have I mentioned it?"

"No, but she is about five feet six."

"How the — could you know that?"

"You tell Percy's height in his stocking soles, and when she reached to his mouth and kissed him she had to stand on her tiptoes so to do."

Tommy said this in a most business-like tone, but could not help smacking his lips. He smacked them again when he had to write,

"Have no fear, little woman, I am by your side."

Or,—"What a sweet child you are."

Pym had probably fallen into the way of making the Percys revel in such epithets because he could not remember the girl's name, but this delicious use of the diminutive, as addressed to full-grown ladies, went to Tommy's head. His solemn face kept his secret, but he had some narrow escapes, as once when saying good-night to Elspeth he kissed her on mouth, eyes, nose, and ears, and said, "Shall I tuck you in, little woman?" He came to himself with a start.

"I forgot," he said, hurriedly, and got out of the room without telling what he had forgotten.

Pym's publishers knew their man, and their arrangement with him was that he was paid on completion of the tale. But always before he reached the middle he struck for what they called his honorarium, and this troubled them, for the tale was appearing week by week as it was written. If they were obdurate he suddenly concluded his story in such words as these:

"Several years have passed since these events took place, and the scene changes to a lovely garden by the bank of old Father Thames. A young man sits by the soft-flowing stream, and he is calm as the scene itself, for the storm has passed away, and Percy (for it is no other) has found an anchorage. As he sits musing over the past, Felicity steals out by the French window and puts her soft arms round his neck. 'My little wife!' he murmurs. *The End, unless you pay up by messenger.*"

This last line, which was not meant for the world (but little would Pym have cared though it had been printed), usually brought his employers to their knees, and then, as Tommy advanced in experience, came the pickings, for Pym, with money in his pockets, had important engagements round the corner and risked intrusting his amanuensis with the writing of the next instalment, "all except the bang at the end."

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Smaller people in Tommy's state of mind would have hurried straight to the love-passages, but he saw the danger and forced his Pegasus away from them. "Do your day's toil first," he may be conceived saying to that animal, "and at evenfall I shall let you out to browse." So, with this reward in front, he devoted many pages to the dreary adventures of pretentious males, and even found a certain pleasure in keeping the lady waiting. But as soon as he reached her he lost his head again.

"Oh, you beauty! oh, you small pet!" he said to himself, with solemn transport.

As the artist in him was stirred, great problems presented themselves; for instance, in certain circumstances was darling or little one the better phrase! Darling in solitary grandeur is more pregnant of meaning than little one, but little has a flavor of the patronizing which darling perhaps lacks. He wasted many sheets over such questions, but they were in his pocket when Pym or Elspeth opened the door. It is wonderful how much you can conceal between the touch on the handle and the opening of the door if your heart is in it.

Despite this fine practice, however, he was the shyest of mankind in the presence of women, and this shyness grew upon him with the years. Was it because he never tried to uncork himself? Oh, no! It was about this time that he one day put his arm round Clara, the servant, not passionately, but with deliberation, as if he were making an experiment with machinery. He then listened as if to hear Clara ticking. He wrote an admirable love-letter, warm, dignified, sincere, to nobody in particular, and carried it about in his pocket in readiness. But in love-making, as in the other arts, those do it best who cannot tell how it is done, and he was always stricken with a palsy when about to present that letter. It seemed that he was only able to speak to ladies when they were not there. Well, if he could not speak he thought the more; he thought so profoundly that in time the heroines of Pym ceased to thrill him.

This was because he had found out that they were not flesh and blood, but he did not delight in his discovery; it horrified him, for what he wanted was the old thrill. To make them human so that they could

be his little friends again, nothing less was called for. This meant slaughter here and there of the great Pym's brainwork, and Tommy tried to keep his hands off, but his heart was in it. In Pym's pages the ladies were the most virtuous and proper of their sex (though dreadfully persecuted), but he merely told you so at the beginning, and now and again afterward to fill up, and then allowed them to act with what may be called rashness, so that the story did not really suffer. Before Tommy was nineteen he changed all that. Out went this because she would not have done it, and that because she could not have done it; fathers might now have taken a lesson from T. Sandys in the upbringing of their daughters; he even sternly struck out the diminutives. With a pen in his hand and woman in his head he had such noble thoughts that his tears of exaltation damped the pages as he wrote, and the ladies must have been astounded as well as proud to see what they were turning into.

That was Tommy with a pen in his hand and a handkerchief hard by, but it was another Tommy, who, when the finest bursts were over, sat back in his chair and rested. The lady was consistent now, and he would think about her and think and think, until concentration, which is a pair of blazing eyes, seemed to draw her out of the fool's-cap to his side, and then he and she sported in a way forbidden in the tale. While he sat there with eyes riveted he had her to dinner at a restaurant, and took her up the river, and called her "little woman," and when she held up her mouth he said, tantalizingly, that she must wait until he had finished his cigar. This queer delight enjoyed, back he popped her into the story, where she was again the vehicle for such glorious sentiments that Elspeth, to whom he read the best of them, feared he was becoming too good to live.

In the meantime the great penny public were slowly growing restive, and at last the two little round men called on Pym to complain that he was falling off, and Pym turned them out of doors and then sat down heroically to do what he had not done for two decades, to read his latest work.

"Elspeth, go up-stairs to your room,"

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whispered Tommy, and then he folded his arms proudly. He should have been in a tremble, but latterly he had often felt that he must burst if he did not soon read some of his bits to Pym, more especially the passages about the hereafter; also the opening of Chapter Seventeen.

At first Pym's only comment was, "It is the same old drivel as before; what more can they want?"

But presently he looked up, puzzled. "Is this chapter yours or mine?" he demanded.

"It is about half and half," said Tommy.

"Is mine the first half? Where does yours begin?"

"That is not exactly what I mean," explained Tommy, in a glow, but backing a little; "you wrote that chapter first, and then I—I——"

"You re-wrote it!" roared Pym, "you dared to meddle with——" He was speechless with fury.

"I tried to keep my hand off," Tommy said, with dignity, "but the thing had to be done, and they are human now."

"Human! who wants them to be human? The fiends seize you, boy, you have even been tinkering with my heroine's personal appearance; what is this you have been doing to her nose?"

"I turned it up slightly, that's all," said Tommy.

"I like them down," roared Pym.

"I prefer them up," said Tommy, stiffly.

"Where," cried Pym, turning over the leaves in a panic, "where is the scene in the burning house?"

"It's out," Tommy explained, "but there is a chapter in its place about—it's mostly about the beauty of the soul being everything, and mere physical beauty nothing. Oh, Mr. Pym, sit down and let me read it to you."

But Pym read it, and a great deal more, for himself. No wonder he stormed, for the impossible had been made not only consistent, but unreadable. The plot was lost for chapters, the characters no longer did anything, and then went and did something else; you were told instead how they did it; you were not allowed to make up your own mind about them; you had to listen to the mind of T. Sandys; he described and he analyzed; the road he had

tried to clear through the thicket was impassable for chips.

"A few more weeks of this," said Pym, "and we should all three be turned out into the streets."

Tommy went to bed in an agony of mortification, but presently to his side came Pym.

"Where did you copy this from?" he asked. "'It is when we are thinking of those we love that our noblest thoughts come to us, and the more worthy they are of our love the nobler the thought, hence it is that no one has done the greatest work who did not love God.'"

"I copied it from nowhere," replied Tommy, fiercely; "it's my own."

"Well, it has nothing to do with the story, and so is only a blot on it, and I have no doubt the thing has been said much better before. Still, I suppose it is true."

"It's true," said Tommy; "and yet——"

"Go on. I want to know all about it."

"And yet," Tommy said, puzzled, "I've known noble thoughts come to me when I was listening to a brass band."

Pym chuckled. "Funny things, noble thoughts," he agreed. He read another passage:

"'It was the last half hour of day when I was admitted with several others to look upon my friend's dead face. A handkerchief had been laid over it. I raised the handkerchief. I know not what the others were thinking, but the last time we met he had told me something, it was not much, only that no woman had ever kissed him. It seemed to me that as I gazed the wistfulness came back to his face. I whispered to a woman who was present, and stooping over him she was about to—but her eyes were dry, and I stopped her. The handkerchief was replaced, and all left the room save myself. Again I raised the handkerchief. I cannot tell you how innocent he looked.'"

"Who was he?" asked Pym.

"Nobody," said Tommy, with some awe; "it just came to me. Do you notice how simple the wording is? It took me some time to make it so simple."

"You are just nineteen, I think?"

"Yes."

Pym looked at him wonderingly.

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"Thomas," he said, "you are a very queer little devil."

He also said, "And it is possible you may find the treasure you are always talking about. Don't jump to the ceiling, my friend, because I say that; I was once after the treasure myself, and you can see whether I found it."

From about that time, on the chances that this mysterious treasure might spring up in the form of a new kind of flower, Pym zealously cultivated the ground, and Tommy had an industrious time of it. He was taken off his stories, which at once regained their elasticity, and put on to exercises.

"If you have nothing to say on the subject, say nothing," was one of the new rules which few would have expected from Pym. Another was, "As soon as you can say what you think, and not what some other person has thought for you, you are on the way to being a remarkable man."

"Without concentration, Thomas, you are lost; concentrate though your coat-tails be on fire.

"Try your hand at description, and when you have done chortling over the result reduce the whole by half without missing anything out.

"Analyze your characters and their motives at the prodigious length in which you revel, and then, my sonny, cut your analysis out. It is for your own guidance, not the reader's.

"'I have often noticed,' you are always saying. The story has nothing to do with you. Obliterate yourself. I see that will be your stiffest job.

"Stop preaching. It seems to me the pulpit is where you should look for the treasure. Nineteen, and you are already as didactic as seventy."

And so on.

Over his exercises Tommy was now engrossed for so long a period that as he sits there you may observe his legs slowly lengthening and the coming of his beard. No, his legs lengthened as he sat with his feet in the basket, but I feel sure that his beard burst through prematurely some night when he was thinking too hard about the ladies.

There were no ladies in the exercises, for despite their altercation about noses Pym knew that on this subject Tommy's mind

was a blank. But he recognized the sex's importance, and, becoming possessed once more of a black coat, marched his pupil into the somewhat shoddy drawing-rooms still open to him, and there ordered Tommy to be fascinated for his future good. But it was as it had always been. Tommy sat white and speechless and apparently bored, could not even say "You sing with so much expression," when the lady at the piano-forte had finished.

"Shyness I could pardon?" the exasperated Pym would roar, "but want of interest is almost immoral. At your age the blood would have been coursing through my veins. Love! You are incapable of it. There is not a drop of sentiment in your frozen carcass."

"Can I help that?" growled Tommy. It was an agony to him even to speak about women.

"If you can't," said Pym, "all is over with you. An artist without sentiment is a painter without colors. Young man, I fear you are doomed."

And Tommy believed him and quaked. He had the most gallant struggles with himself. He even set his teeth and joined a dancing class, though neither Pym nor Elspeth knew of it, and it never showed afterward in his legs. In appearance he was now beginning to be the Sandys of the photographs, a little over the middle height and rather heavily built; nothing to make you uncomfortable until you saw his face. That solemn countenance never responded when he laughed, and stood coldly by when he was on fire; he might have winked for an eternity and still the onlooker must have thought himself mistaken. In his boyhood the mask had descended scarce below his mouth, for there was a dimple in the chin to put you at your ease, but now the short brown beard had come, and he was forever hidden from the world.

He had the dandy's tastes for superb neckties, velvet jackets, and he got the ties instead of dining; he panted for the jacket, knew all the shop-windows it was in, but for years denied himself with a moan so that he might buy pretty things for Elspeth. When eventually he got it, Pym's friends ridiculed him. When he saw how ill his face matched it he ridiculed himself. Often when Tommy was feeling that now at last the ladies must come to heel, he saw his

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face suddenly in a mirror and all the spirit went out of him. But still he clung to his velvet jacket.

I see him in it stalking through the terrible dances, a heroic figure at last. He shuddered every time he found himself on one leg, he got sternly into everybody's way, he was the butt of the little noodle of an instructor; all the social tortures he endured grimly in the hope that at last the cork would come out. Then though there were all kinds of girls in the class, merry, sentimental, practical, coquettish, prudes, there was no kind, he felt, whose heart he could not touch; in love-making, as in the favorite Thrums game of the dambrod, there are sixty-one openings and he knew them all. Yet at the last dance as at the first the universal opinion of his partners (shop-girls mostly from the large millinery establishments, who had to fly like Cinderellas when the clock struck a certain hour) was that he kept himself to himself, and they were too much the lady to make up to a gentleman who so obviously did not want them.

Pym encouraged his friends to jeer at Tommy's want of interest in the sex, thinking it a way of goading him to action. One evening, the bottles circulating, they mentioned one Dolly, goddess at some bar, as a fit instructress for him. Coarse pleasantries passed, but for a time he writhed in silence, then burst upon them indignantly for their unmanly smirching of a woman's character, and swept out, leaving them a little ashamed. That was very like Tommy.

But presently a desire came over him to see this girl, and it came because they had hinted such dark things about her. That was like him also.

There was probably no harm in Dolly, though it is man's proud right to question it in exchange for his bitters. She was tall and willowy and stretched her neck like a swan and returned you your change with disdainful languor; to call such a haughty beauty Dolly was one of the minor triumphs for man, and Dolly they all called her, except the only one who could have given an artistic justification for it.

This one was a bearded stranger who, when he knew that Pym and his friends were elsewhere, would enter the bar with a cigar in his mouth and ask for a whiskey and water, which was heroism again, for

smoking was ever detestable to him and whiskey more offensive than quinine. But these things are expected of you, and by asking for the whiskey you get into talk with Dolly, that is to say, you tell her several times what you want, and when she has served every other body you get it. The commercial must be served first; in the bar-room he blocks the way like royalty in the street. There is a crown for us all somewhere.

Dolly seldom heard the bearded one's "Good-evening"; she could not possibly have heard the "Dear," for though it was there it remained behind his teeth. She knew him only as the stiff man who got separated from his glass without complaining, and at first she put this down to forgetfulness and did nothing, so that he could go away without drinking, but by and by, whenever he left his tumbler, cunningly concealed behind a water-bottle or temptingly in front of a commercial, she restored it to him, and there was a twinkle in her eye.

"You little rogue, so you see through me!" Surely it was an easy thing to say, but what he did say was "Thank you." Then to himself he said, "Ass, ass, ass!"

Sitting on the padded seat that ran the length of the room, and surreptitiously breaking his cigar against the cushions to help it on its way to an end, he brought his intellect to bear on Dolly at a distance and soon had a better knowledge of her than could be claimed by those who had Dollied her for years. He also wove romances about her, some of them of too lively a character, and others so noble and sad and beautiful that the tears came to his eyes and Dolly thought he had been drinking. He could not have said whether he would prefer her to be good or bad.

These were but his leisure moments, for during the long working hours he was still at the exercises, toiling fondly and right willing to tear himself asunder to get at the trick of writing. So he passed from exercises to the grand experiment.

It was to be a tale, for there, they had taken for granted, lay the treasure. Pym was most considerate at this time, and mentioned woman with an apology.

"I have kept away from them in the

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exercises," he said in effect, "because it would have been useless (as well as cruel) to force you to labor on a subject so uncongenial to you, and for the same reason I have decided that it is to be a tale of adventure, in which the heroine need be little more than a beautiful sack of coals which your cavalier carries about with him on his left shoulder. I am afraid we must have her to that extent, Thomas, but I am not asking much of you; dump her down as often as you like."

And Thomas did his dogged best, the red light in his eye; though he had not and never could have had the smallest instinct for writing stories, he knew to the finger-tips how it is done, but forever he would have gone on breaking all the rules of the game. How he wrestled with himself! Sublime thoughts came to him (nearly all about that girl) and he drove them away, for he knew they beat only against the march of his story, and, whatever befall, the story must march. Relentlessly he followed in the track of his men, pushing the dreary dogs on to deeds of valor. He tried making the lady human, and then she would not march; she sat still and he talked about her, he dumped her down and soon he was yawning. This weariness was what alarmed him most, for well he understood that there could be no treasure where the work was not engrossing play, and he doubted no more than Pym that for him the treasure was in the tale or nowhere. Had he not been sharpening his tools in this belief for years? Strange to reflect now, that all the time he was hacking and sweating at that story (the last he ever attempted) it was only marching toward the waste-paper basket.

He had a fine capacity, as has been hinted, for self-deception, and in time, of course, he found a way of dodging the disquieting truth. This, equally, of course, was by yielding to his impulses. He allowed himself an hour a day, when Pym was absent, in which he wrote the story as it seemed to want to write itself, and then he cut this piece out, which could be done quite easily, as it consisted only of moralizings. Thus was his day brightened, and with this relaxation to look forward to he plodded on at his proper work, delving so hard that he could avoid asking himself why he was still delving. What shall we

say? he was digging for the treasure in an orchard, and every now and again he came out of his hole to pluck an apple, but though the apple was so sweet to the mouth, it never struck him that the treasure might be growing overhead. At first he destroyed the fruit of his stolen hour, and even after he took to carrying it about fondly in his pocket and to re-writing it in a splendid new form that had come to him just as he was stepping into bed, he continued to conceal it from his overseer's eyes. And still he thought all was over with him when Pym said the story did not march.

"It is a dead thing," Pym would roar, flinging down the manuscript, "a dead thing because the stakes your man is playing for, a woman's love, is less than a wooden counter to you. You are a fine piece of mechanism, my solemn-faced don, but you are a watch that won't go because you are not wound up. Nobody can wind the artist up except a chit of a girl, and how you are ever to get one to take pity on you, only the Gods who look after men with a want can tell."

"It becomes more impenetrable every day," he said. "No use your sitting there tearing yourself to bits. Out into the street with you. I suspend these sittings until you can tell me you have kissed a girl."

He was still saying this sort of thing when the famous "Letters" were published, T. Sandys author. "Letters to a Young Man about to be Married" was the full title, and another almost as applicable would have been "Bits Cut out of a Story because they Prevented its Marching." If you have any memory you do not need to be told how that splendid study, so ennobling, so penetrating, of woman at her best, took the town. Tommy woke a famous man, and except Elspeth no one was more pleased than big-hearted, hopeless Pym.

"But how the — has it all come about!" he kept roaring.

"A woman can be anything that the man who loves her would have her be," says the "Letters," and "Oh," said woman everywhere, "if all men had the same ideal of us as Mr. Sandys!"

"To meet Mr. T. Sandys." Leaders of society wrote it on their invitation

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cards. Their daughters a-thirst for a new sensation thrilled at the thought, "Will he talk to us as nobly as he writes!" and oh, how willing he was to do it, especially if their noses were slightly turned up.

CHAPTER III

SANDYS ON WOMEN



AN you kindly tell the name of the book I want?"

It is the commonest question asked at the circulating library by dainty ladies just out of the carriage, and the librarian after looking them over can usually tell. In the days we have now to speak of, however, he answered, without looking them over:

"Sandys's Letters."

"Ah, yes, of course. May I have it, please?"

"I regret to find that it is out."

Then the lady looked naughty. "Why don't you have two copies?" she pouted.

"Madam," said the librarian, "we have a thousand."

A small and very timid girl of eighteen, with a neat figure that shrank from observation, although already aware that it looked best in gray, was there to drink in this music and carried it home in her heart. She was Elspeth, and that dear heart was almost too full at this time; I hesitate whether to tell or to conceal how it even created a disturbance in no less a place than the House of Commons. She was there with Mrs. Jerry, and the thing was recorded in the papers of the period in these blasting words: "The Home Secretary was understood to be quoting a passage from 'Letters to a Young Man,' but we failed to catch its drift owing to an unseemly interruption from the ladies' gallery."

"But what was it you cried out?" Tommy asked Elspeth when she thought she had told him everything. (Like all true women, she always began in the middle.)

"Oh, Tommy, have I not told you? I cried out, 'I'm his sister.'"

Thus, owing to Elspeth's behavior, it can never be known which was the pas-

sage quoted in the House, but we may be sure of one thing, that it did the House good. That book did everybody good, even Pym could only throw off its beneficent effects by a tremendous effort, and young men about to be married used to ask at the bookshops, not for the "Letters," but simply for "Sandys on Woman," acknowledging Tommy as the authority on the subject, like Mill on Jurisprudence, or Thomson and Tait on the Differential Calculus. Controversies raged about it. Some thought he asked too much of man, some thought he saw too much in women; there was a fear that young people, knowing at last how far short they fell of what they ought to be, might shrink from the matrimony that must expose them to each other, now that they had Sandys to guide them, and the persons who had simply married and risked it (and it was astounding what a number of them there proved to be) wrote to the papers suggesting that he might yield a little in the next edition. But Sandys remained firm.

At first they took for granted that he was a very aged gentleman; he had indeed hinted at this in the text, and when the truth came out ("And just fancy, he is not even married!") the enthusiasm was doubled. "Not engaged!" they cried, "don't tell that to me. No unmarried man could have written such a eulogy of marriage without being on the brink of it." Perhaps she was dead? It ran through the town that she was dead. Some knew which cemetery.

The very first lady Mr. Sandys ever took in to dinner mentioned this rumor to him, not with vulgar curiosity; but delicately, with a hint of sympathy in waiting, and it must be remembered, in fairness to Tommy, that all artists love sympathy. This sympathy uncorked him, and our Tommy could flow comparatively freely at last. Observe the delicious change.

"Has that story got abroad," he said, simply. "The matter is one which, I need not say, I have never mentioned to a soul."

"Of course not," the lady said, and waited eagerly.

If Tommy had been an expert he might have turned the conversation to brighter topics, but he was not; there had already been long pauses, and in dinner talk it is

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perhaps allowable to fling on any faggot rather than let the fire go out. "It is odd that I should be talking of it now," he said, musingly.

"I suppose," she said, gently, to bring him out of the reverie into which he had sunk, "I suppose it happened some time ago?"

"Long, long ago," he answered. Having written as an aged person he often found difficulty in remembering suddenly that he was two-and-twenty.

"But you are still a very young man."

"It seems long ago to me," he said, with a sigh.

"Was she beautiful?"

"She was beautiful to my eyes."

"And as good I am sure as she was beautiful."

"Ah me!" said Tommy.

His confidante was burning to know more and hoping they were being observed across the table, but she was a kind, sentimental creature, though stout, or because of it, and she said, "I am so afraid that my questions pain you."

"No, no," said Tommy, who was very, very happy.

"Was it very sudden?"

"Fever."

"Ah! But I meant your attachment."

"We met and we loved," he said, with gentle dignity.

"That is the true way," said the lady.

"It is the only way," he said, decisively.

"Mr. Sandys, you have been so good, I wonder if you would tell me her name?"

"Mildred," he said with emotion. Presently he looked up. "It is very strange to me," he said, wonderingly, "to find myself saying these things to you who an hour ago were a complete stranger to me. But you are not like the other women."

"No, indeed!" said the lady, warmly.

"That," he said, "must be why I tell you what I have never told to another human being. How mysterious are the workings of the heart."

"Mr. Sandys," said the lady, quite carried away, "no words of mine can convey to you the pride with which I hear you say that. Be assured that I shall respect your confidences." She missed his next remark because she was wondering whether she dare ask him to come to dinner on the

twenty-fifth, and then the ladies had to retire, and by the time he rejoined her he was as tongue-tied as at the beginning. The cork had not been extracted; it had been knocked into the bottle where it still often barred the way, and there was always, as we shall see, a flavor of it in the wine.

"You will get over it yet, the summer and the flowers will come to you again," she managed to whisper to him kindly as she was going.

"Thank you," he said with that inscrutable face. It was far from his design to play a part, he had indeed had no design at all, but an opportunity for sentiment having presented itself, his mouth had opened as at a cherry. He did not laugh afterward even when he reflected how unexpectedly Mildred had come into his life, he thought of her rather with affectionate regard, and pictured her as a tall slim girl in white. When he took a tall slim girl in white in to dinner he could not help saying, huskily:

"You remind me of one who was a very dear friend of mine. I was much startled when you came into the room."

"You mean someone who is dead?" she asked, in awe-struck tones.

"Fever," he said.

"You think I am like her in appearance?"

"In every way," he said, dreamily, "the same sweet—pardon me, but it is very remarkable. Even the tones of the voice are the same. I suppose I ought not to ask your age?"

"I shall be twenty-one in August."

"She would have been twenty-one in August had she lived," Tommy said, with fervor. "My dear young lady——"

This was the aged gentleman again, but she did not wince; he soon found out that they expect authors to say the oddest things, and this proved to be a great help to him.

"My dear young lady, I feel that I know you very well."

"That," she said, "is only because I resemble your friend outwardly. The real me (she was a bit of philosopher also) you cannot know at all."

He smiled sadly. "Has it ever struck you," he asked, "that you are very unlike other women?"

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"Oh, how ever could you have found that out?" she exclaimed, amazed.

Almost before he knew how it came about he was on terms of very pleasant sentiment with this girl, for they now shared between them a secret that he had confided to no other. His face, which had been so much against him hitherto, was at last in his favor; it showed so plainly that when he looked at her more softly or held her hand longer than is customary, he was really thinking of that other of whom she was the image. Or if it did not precisely show that, it suggested something or other of that nature which did just as well. There was a sweet something between them which brought them together, and also kept them apart; it allowed them to go a certain length, while it was also a reason why they could never, never exceed that distance; and this was an ideal state for Tommy, who could be most loyal and tender so long as it was understood that he meant nothing in particular. She was the right kind of girl, too, and admired him the more (and perhaps went a step farther) because he remained so true to Mildred's memory.

You must not think him calculating and cold-blooded, for nothing could be less true to the fact. When not engaged, indeed, on his new work, he might waste some time planning scenes with exquisite ladies, in which he sparkled or had a hidden sorrow (he cared not which); but these scenes seldom came to life. He preferred very pretty girls to be rather stupid (oh, the artistic instinct of the man!), but instead of keeping them stupid, as he wanted to do, he found himself trying to improve their minds. They screwed up their noses in the effort. Meaning to thrill the celebrated beauty, who had been specially invited to meet him, he devoted himself to a plain woman, for whose plainness a sudden pity had mastered him (for like all true worshippers of beauty in women, he always showed best in the presence of plain ones). With the intention of being a gallant knight to Lady I-Won't-Tell-The-Name, a whim of the moment made him so stiff to her that she ultimately asked the reason; and such a charmingly sad reason presented itself to him that she immediately invited him to her riverside party on Thursday week. He had the conver-

sations and incidents of that party ready long before the day arrived; he altered them and polished them as other young gentlemen in the same circumstances overhaul their boating costumes; but when he joined the party there was among them the children's governess, and, seeing her slighted, his blood boiled, and he was her attendant for the afternoon.

Elsbeth was not at this pleasant jink in high life. She had been invited, but her ladyship had once let Tommy kiss her hand for the first and last time; so he decided sternly that this was no place for Elspeth. When temptation was high he first locked Elspeth up, and then walked into it.

With two in every three women he was still as shy as ever, but the third he walked triumphantly to the conservatory. She did no harm to his work, rather sent him back to it refreshed; it was as if he were shooting the sentiment which other young men get rid of more gradually by beginning earlier, and there were such accumulations of it that I don't know whether he ever made up on them. Punishment sought him in the night, when he dreamt constantly that he was married, to whom scarcely mattered; he saw himself coming out of a church a married man, and the fright woke him up. But with the daylight came again his talent for dodging thoughts that were lying in wait, and he yielded as recklessly as before to every sentimental impulse. As illustration, take his humorous passage with Mrs. Jerry. Geraldine something was her name, but friends called her Mrs. Jerry.

She was a wealthy widow, buxom, not a day over thirty when she was merry, which might be at inappropriate moments, as immediately after she had expressed a desire to lead the higher life. "But I have a theory, my dear," she said solemnly to Elspeth, "that no woman is able to do it who cannot see her own nose without the help of a mirror." She had taken a great fancy to Elspeth, and made many engagements with her and kept some of them, and the understanding was that she apprenticed herself to Tommy through Elspeth, he being too terrible to face by himself, or as Mrs. Jerry expressed it, "all nose." So Tommy had seen very little of her and thought less until one day he

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called by passionate request to sign her birthday-book, and heard himself proposing to her instead.

For one thing it was twilight, and she had forgotten to ring for the lamps. That might have been enough, but there was more; she read to him part of a letter in which her hand was solicited in marriage, "and for the life of me," said Mrs. Jerry, almost in tears, "I cannot decide whether to say yes or no."

This put Tommy in a most awkward position. There are probably men who could have got out of it without proposing, but to him there seemed at the moment no other way open. The letter complicated matters also by beginning "Dear Jerry" and saying "little Jerry" farther on, expressions which stirred him strangely.

"Why do you read this to me?" he asked in a voice that broke a little.

"Because you are so wise," she said. "Do you mind?"

"Do I mind!" he exclaimed bitterly. ("Take care, you idiot!" he said to himself.)

"I was only asking your advice. Is it too much?"

"Not at all. I am quite the right man to consult at such a moment, am I not!"

It was said with profound meaning, but his face was as usual.

"That is what I thought," she said, in all good faith.

"You do not even understand!" he cried, and he was also looking longingly at his hat.

"Understand what?"

"Jerry," he said, and tried to stop himself, with the result that he added "dear little Jerry." ("What am I doing!" he groaned.)

She understood now. "You don't mean—" she began in amazement.

"Yes," he cried, passionately. "I love you. Will you be my wife? ("I am lost!")"

"Gracious!" exclaimed Mrs. Jerry, and then on reflection she became indignant. "I would not have believed it of you," she said, scornfully. "Is it my money or what? I am not at all clever, so you must tell me."

With Tommy of course it was not her money. Except when he had Elspeth to consider he was as much a Quixote about

money as Pym himself, and at no moment of his life was he a snob.

"I am sorry you should think so meanly of me," he said, with dignity, lifting his hat, and he would have got away then (which when you come to think of it was what he wanted) had he been able to resist an impulse to heave a broken-hearted sigh at the door.

"Don't go yet, Mr. Sandys," she begged, "I may have been hasty. And yet—why, we are merely acquaintances."

He had meant to be very careful now, but that word sent him off again. "Acquaintances!" he cried, "no, we were never that."

"It almost seemed to me that you avoided me."

"You noticed it!" he said, eagerly. "At least you do me that justice. Oh, how I tried to avoid you!"

"It was because——"

"Alas!"

She was touched of course, but still puzzled. "We know so little of each other," she said.

"I see," he replied, "that you know me very little, Mrs. Jerry, but you—oh, Jerry, Jerry, I know you as no other man has ever known you!"

"I wish I had proof of it," she said, helplessly.

Proof! She should not have asked Tommy for proof. "I know," he cried, "how unlike all other women you are. To the world you are like the rest, but in your heart you know that you are different, you know it and I know it, and no other person knows it."

Yes, Mrs. Jerry knew it, and had often marvelled over it in the seclusion of her boudoir, but that another should have found it out was strange and almost terrifying.

"I know you love me now," she said, softly, "only love could have shown you that, but—oh, let me go away for a minute to think," and she ran out of the room.

Other suitors have been left for a space in Tommy's state of doubt, but never, it may be hoped, with the same emotions. Oh, Heavens, if she should accept him! He saw Elspeth sickening and dying of the news.

His guardian angel, however, was very

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good to Tommy at this time, or, perhaps, like cannibals with their prisoner, the God of sentiment (who has a tail) was fattening him for a future feast, and Mrs. Jerry's answer was that it could never be.

Tommy bowed his head.

But she hoped he would let her be his very dear friend. It would be the proudest recollection of her life that Mr. Sandys had entertained such feelings for her.

Nothing could have been better, and he should have been finding difficulty in concealing his delight, but this strange Tommy was really feeling his part again. It was an unforced tear that came to his eye. Quite naturally he looked long and wistfully at her.

"Jerry, Jerry," he articulated, huskily, and whatever the words mean in these circumstances he really meant, then he put his lips to her hand for the first and last time, and so was gone, broken but brave. He was in splendid fettle for writing that evening. Wild animals sleep after gorging, but it sent this monster, refreshed, to his work.

Nevertheless, the incident gave him some uneasy reflections. Was he indeed a monster, was one that he could dodge as yet, but suppose Mrs. Jerry told his dear Elspeth of what had happened? She had said that she would not, but a secret in Mrs. Jerry's breast was like her pug in her arms, always kicking to get free.

"Elspeth," said Tommy, "what do you say to going north and having a sight of Thrums again?"

He knew what she would say. They had been talking for years of going back; it was the great day that all her correspondence with old friends in Thrums looked forward to.

"They made little of you, Tommy," she said, "when we left, but I'm thinking they will all be at their windows when you go back."

"Oh," replied Thomas, "that's nothing. But I should like to shake Corp by the hand again."

"And Aaron," said Elspeth. She was knitting stockings for Aaron at that moment.

"And Gavinia," Tommy said, "and the dominie."

"And Ailie."

And then came an awkward pause, for they were both thinking of that independent girl called Grizel. She was seldom discussed. Tommy had a queer shyness about mentioning her name; he would have preferred Elspeth to mention it, and Elspeth had misgivings that this was so, with the result that neither could say Grizel without wondering what was in the other's mind. Tommy had written twice to Grizel, the first time unknown to Elspeth, but that was in the days when the ladies of the penny numbers were disturbing him, and against his better judgment (for well he knew she would never stand it) he had begun his letter with these mad words, "Dear little woman." She did not answer this, but soon afterward she wrote to Elspeth, and he was not mentioned in the letter proper, but it carried a sting in its tail: "P. S.," it said, "How is Sentimental Tommy?"

None but a fiend in human shape could have written that, and Elspeth put her protecting arms round her brother. "Now we know what Grizel is," she said. "I am done with her now."

But when Tommy had got back his wind he said, nobly: "I'll call her no names. If this is how she likes to repay me for—for all my kindnesses, let her. But, Elspeth, if I have the chance, I shall go on being good to her just the same."

Elspeth adored him for it, but Grizel would have stamped had she known. He had that comfort.

The second letter he never posted. It was written a few months before he became a celebrity, and had very fine things indeed in it, for old Dr. McQueen, Grizel's dear friend, had just died at his post, and it was a letter of condolence. While Tommy wrote it he was in a quiver of genuine emotion, as he was very pleased to feel, and it had a specially satisfying bit about death and the world never being the same again. He knew it was good, but he did not send it to her, for no reason I can discover save that postscript jarred on him.

TOMMY AND GRIZEL

BY J. M. BARRIE

Author of "Sentimental Tommy," "The Little Minister," etc.

CHAPTER IV

GRIZEL



O expose Tommy for what he was, to appear to be scrupulously fair to him so that I might really damage him the more, that is what I set out to do in this book, and always when he seemed to be finding a way of getting round me (as I had a secret dread he might do) I was to remember Grizel and be obdurate. But if I have so far got past some of his virtues without even mentioning them (and I have), I know how many opportunities for discrediting him have been missed, and that would not greatly matter, there are so many more to come, if Grizel were on my side. But she is not; throughout those first chapters a voice has been crying to me, "Take care, if you hurt him you will hurt me," and I know it to be the voice of Grizel, and I seem to see her, rocking her arms as she used to rock them when excited in the days of her innocent childhood. "Don't, don't, don't," she cried at every cruel word I gave him, and she to whom it was ever such agony to weep dropped a tear upon each of them so that they were obliterated, and "Surely I knew him best," she said, "and I always loved him," and she stood there defending him, with her hand on her heart to conceal the gaping wound that Tommy had made.

Well, if Grizel had always loved him there was surely something fine and rare about Tommy. But what was it, Grizel, why did you always love him, you who saw into him so well and demanded so much of men? When I ask that question the spirit that hovers round my desk to protect Tommy from me rocks her arms mournfully, as if she did not know the answer; it is only when I seem to see her

as she so often was in life, before she got that wound and after, bending over some little child and looking up radiant, that I think I suddenly know why she always loved Tommy. It was because he had such need of her.

I don't know whether you remember, but there were once some children who played at Jacobites in the Thrums den under Tommy's leadership; Elspeth, of course, was one of them, and there were Corp Shiach and Gavinia, and lastly, there was Grizel. Had Tommy's parents been alive she would not have been allowed to join, for she was a painted lady's child, but Tommy insisted on having her, and Grizel thought it was just sweet of him. He also chatted with her in public places, as if she were a respectable character, and oh, how she longed to be respectable! but, on the other hand, he was the first to point out how superbly he was behaving, and his ways were masterful, so the independent girl would not be captain's wife; if he said she was captain's wife he had to apologize, and if he merely looked it he had to apologize just the same.

One night the painted lady died in the den, and then it would have gone hard with the lonely girl had not Dr. McQueen made her his little housekeeper, not out of pity, he vowed (she was so anxious to be told that), but because he was an old bachelor, sorely in need of someone to take care of him. And how she took care of him! But though she was so happy now, she knew that she must be very careful, for there was something in her blood that might waken and prevent her being a good woman. She thought it would be sweet to be good.

She told all this to Tommy, and he was profoundly interested and consulted a wise man, whose advice was that when she grew up she should be wary of any man whom she liked and mistrusted in one

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breath. Meaning to do her a service, Tommy communicated this to her, and then, what do you think, Grizel would have no more dealings with him! By and by the gods, in a sportive mood, sent him to labor on a farm, whence, as we have seen, he found a way to London, and while he was growing into a man Grizel became a woman. At the time of the doctor's death she was nineteen, tall and graceful, and very dark and pale. When the winds of the day flushed her cheek she was beautiful, but it was a beauty that hid the mystery of her face; the sun made her merry, but she looked more noble when it had set, then her pallor shone with a soft radiant light, as though the mystery and sadness and serenity of the moon were in it. The full beauty of Grizel came out only at night, like the stars.

I had made up my mind that when the time came to describe Grizel's mere outward appearance I should refuse her that word beautiful because of her tilted nose. But now that the time has come I wonder at myself. Probably when I am chapters ahead I shall return to this one and strike out the word beautiful, and then as likely as not I shall come back afterwards and put it in again. Whether it will be there at the end God knows. Her eyes at least were beautiful, they were unusually far apart and let you look straight into them and never quivered, they were such clear, gray, searching eyes, they seemed always to be asking for the truth. And she had an adorable mouth. In repose it was perhaps hard because it shut so decisively, but often it screwed up provokingly at one side, as when she smiled or was sorry or for no particular reason, for she seemed unable to control this vagary, which was perhaps a little bit of babyhood that had forgotten to grow up with the rest of her. At those moments the essence of all that was characteristic and delicious about her seemed to have run to her mouth, so that to kiss Grizel on her crooked smile would have been to kiss the whole of her at once. She had a quaint way of nodding her head at you when she was talking; it made you forget what she was saying, though it was really meant to have precisely the opposite effect. Her voice was rich, with many inflections; when she had much to say it

gurgled like a stream in a hurry, but its cooing note was best worth remembering at the end of the day. There were times when she looked like a boy. Her almost gallant bearing, the poise of her head, her noble frankness, they all had something in them of a princely boy who had never known fear.

I have no wish to hide her defects. I would rather linger over them, because they were part of Grizel, and I am sorry to see them go one by one. Thrums had not taken her to its heart. She was stiff and haughty, they said, and had a proud walk; her sense of justice was too great, she scorned frailties that she should have pitied (how strange to think that there was a time when pity was not the feeling that leapt to Grizel's bosom first). She did not care for study, she learned French and the pianoforte to please the doctor, but she preferred to be sewing or dusting. When she might have been reading she was perhaps making for herself one of those costumes that depressed every lady of Thrums who employed a dressmaker, or more probably it was a delicious garment for a baby, for as soon as Grizel heard that there was a new baby anywhere all her intellect deserted her and she became a slave. Books often irritated her because she disagreed with the author, and it was a torment to her to find other people holding to their views when she was so certain that hers were right. In church she sometimes rocked her arms, and the old doctor by her side knew that it was because she could not get up and contradict the minister; she was, I presume, the only young lady who ever dared to say that she hated Sunday because there was so much sitting still in it.

Sitting still did not suit Grizel, at all other times she was happy, but then her mind wandered back to the thoughts that had lived too closely with her in the old days, and she was troubled. What woke her from these reveries was probably the doctor's hand placed very tenderly on her shoulder, and then she would start and wonder how long he had been watching her and what were the grave thoughts behind his cheerful face. For the doctor never looked more cheerful than when he was drawing Grizel away from the ugly past, and he talked to her as if he had no-

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ticed nothing; but after he went upstairs he would pace his bedroom for a long time, and Grizel listened and knew that he was thinking about her. Then perhaps she would run up to him and put her arms around his neck. These scenes brought the doctor and Grizel very close together, but they became rarer as she grew up, and then for once that she was troubled she was a hundred times irresponsible with glee, and, "Oh, you dearest, darlingest," she would cry to him, "I must dance, I must, I must, though it is a Fast Day, and you must dance with your mother this instant, I am so happy, so happy!" Mother was his nickname for her, and she delighted in the word; she lorded it over him as if he were her troublesome boy.

How could she be other than glorious when there was so much to do? The work inside the house she made for herself and outside the doctor made it for her. At last he had found for nurse a woman who could follow his instructions literally, who understood that if he said five o'clock for the medicine the chap of six would not do as well, who did not in her heart despise the thermometer and who resolutely prevented the patient from skipping out of bed to change her pillow-slips because the minister was expected. Such tyranny enraged every sufferer who had been ill before and got better, but what they chiefly complained of to the doctor (and he agreed with a humorous sigh), was her masterfulness about fresh air and cold water. Windows were opened that had never been opened before (they yielded to her pressure with a groan), and as for cold water it might have been said that a bath followed her wherever she went, not, mark me, for putting your hands and face in, not even for your feet, but in you must go, the whole of you, "as if," they said, indignantly, "there was something the matter with our skin."

She could not gossip, not even with the doctor, who liked it of an evening when he had got into his carpet shoes. There was no use telling her a secret, for she kept it to herself forevermore. She had ideas about how men should serve a woman, even the humblest, that made the men gaze with wonder and the women (curiously enough) with irritation. Her greatest scorn was for girls who made

themselves cheap with men, and she could not hide it. It was a physical pain to Grizel to hide her feelings, they popped out in her face, if not in words, and were always in advance of her self-control. To the doctor this impulsiveness was pathetic; he loved her for it, but it sometimes made him uneasy.

He died in the scarlet-fever year. "I'm smitten," he suddenly said at a bedside, and a week afterwards he was gone.

"We must speak of it now, Grizel," he said when he knew that he was dying.

She pressed his hand; she knew to what he was referring. "Yes," she said, "I should love you to speak of it now."

"You and I have always fought shy of it," he said, "making a pretence that it had altogether passed away. I thought that was best for you."

"Dearest, darlingest," she said, "I know, I have always known."

"And you," he said, "you pretended because you thought it was best for me."

She nodded. "And we saw through each other all the time," she said.

"Grizel, has it passed away altogether now?"

Her grip upon his hand did not tighten in the least. "Yes," she could say honestly, "it has altogether passed away."

"And you have no more fear?"

"No, none."

It was his great reward for all that he had done for Grizel.

"I know what you are thinking of," she said when he did not speak. "You are thinking of the haunted little girl you rescued seven years ago."

"No," he answered, "I was thanking God for the brave wholesome woman she has grown into. And for something else, Grizel, for letting me live to see it."

"To do it," she said, pressing his hand to her breast.

She was a strange girl, and she had to speak her mind. "I don't think God has done it all," she said. "I don't even think that He told you to do it. I think He just said to you 'There is a painted lady's child at your door; you can save her if you like.'"

"No," she went on when he would have interposed, "I am sure He did not want to do it all; He even left a little bit of it to me to do myself. I love to think

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that I have done a tiny bit of it myself. I think it is the sweetest thing about God that He lets us do some of it ourselves. Do I hurt you, darling?"

No, she did not hurt him, for he understood her. "But you are naturally so impulsive," he said, "it has often been a sharp pain to me to see you so careful."

"It was not a pain to me to be careful, it was a joy. Oh, the thousand dear delightful joys I have had with you."

"It has made you strong, Grizel, and I rejoice in that; but sometimes I fear that it has made you too difficult to win."

"I don't want to be won," she told him.

"You don't quite mean that, Grizel."

"No," she said at once. She whispered to him impulsively. "It is the only thing I am at all afraid of now."

"What?"

"Love."

"You will not be afraid of it when it comes."

"But I want to be afraid," she said.

"You need not," he answered. "The man on whom those clear eyes rest lovingly will be worthy of it all. If he were not, they would be the first to find him out."

"But need that make any difference?" she asked. "Perhaps though I found him out I should love him just the same."

"Not unless you loved him first, Grizel."

"No," she said at once again. "I am not really afraid of love," she whispered to him. "You have made me so happy that I am afraid of nothing."

Yet she wondered a little that he was not afraid to die, but when she told him this he smiled and said, "Everybody fears death except those who are dying." And when she asked if he had anything on his mind he said, "I leave the world without a care. Not that I have seen all I would fain have seen. Many a time, especially this last year, when I have seen the mother in you crooning to some neighbor's child, I have thought to myself, 'I don't know my Grizel yet, I have seen her only in the bud,' and I would fain —" He broke off. "But I have no fears," he said. "As I lie here with you sitting by my side, looking so serene, I can say, for the first time for half a century, that I have nothing on my mind."

"But, Grizel, I should have married," he told her. "The chief lesson my life has taught me is that they are poor critturs, the men who don't marry."

"If you had married," she said, "you might never have been able to help me."

"It is you who have helped me," he replied. "God sent the child, He is most reluctant to give any of us up. Ay, Grizel, that's what my life has taught me, and it's all I can leave to you." The last he saw of her she was holding his hand and her eyes were dry, her teeth were clenched, but there was a brave smile upon her face, for he had told her that it was thus he would like to see her at the end. After his death she continued to live at the old house; he had left it to her ("I want it to remain in the family" he said) with all his savings, which were quite sufficient for the needs of such a manager; he had also left her plenty to do, and that was a still sweeter legacy.

And the other Jacobites, what of them? Hie, where are you, Corp? Here he comes, grinning in his spleet new uniform to demand our tickets of us. He is now the railway porter. Since Tommy left Thrums "steam" had arrived in it, and Corp had by nature such a gift for giving luggage the twist which breaks everything inside as you dump it down that he was inevitably appointed porter. There was no travelling to Thrums without a ticket. At Tilliedrum, which was the junction for Thrums, you showed your ticket and were then locked in. A hundred yards from Thrums Corp leapt upon the train and fiercely demanded your ticket. At the station he asked you, threateningly, whether you had given up your ticket. Even his wife was afraid of him at such times, and had her ticket ready in her hand.

His wife was one Gavinia, and she had no fear of him except when she was travelling. To his face she referred to him as a doited sumph, but to Grizel pleading for him she admitted that despite his warts and quarrelsome legs he was a great big muckle sonsy, stout, buirdly well-set up, wise-like, havering man. When first Corp had proposed to her she gave him a clout on the head, and so little did he know of the sex that this discouraged him. He continued, however, to propose and she to clout him until he heard, accidentally (he woke up

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in church), of a man in the Bible who had wooed a woman for seven years, and this example he determined to emulate, but when Gavinia heard of it she was so furious that she took him at once. Dazed by his good fortune, he rushed off with it to his aunt, whom he wearied with his repetition of the great news.

"To your bed wi' you," she said, yawning.

"Bed!" cried Corp, indignantly. "And so, auntie, says Gavinia, 'Yes,' says she, 'I'll have you.' Those were her never-to-be-forgotten words."

"You pitiful object," answered his aunt, "men hae been married afore now without making sic a stramash."

"I daursay," retorted Corp, "but they hinna married Gavinia," and this is the best known answer to the sneer of the cynic.

He was a public nuisance that night, and knocked various people up after they had gone to bed to tell them that Gavinia was to have him. He was eventually led home by kindly though indignant neighbors, but early morning found him in the country carrying the news from farm to farm.

"No, I winna sit down," he said, "I just cried in to tell you Gavinia is to hae me." Six miles from home he saw a mud-house on the top of a hill and ascended genially. He found at their porridge a very old lady with a nut-cracker face, and a small boy. We shall see them again. "Auld wifie," said Corp, "I dinna ken you, but I've just stepped up to tell you that Gavinia is to hae me."

It made him the butt of the sportive. If he or Gavinia were nigh they gathered their fowls round them and then said, "Hens, I didna bring you here to feed you, but just to tell you that Gavinia is to hae me." This flustered Gavinia, but Grizel, who enjoyed her own jokes too heartily to have more than a polite interest in those of other people, said to her, "How can you be angry! I think it was just sweet of him."

"But was it no vulgar?"

"Vulgar!" said Grizel. "Why, Gavinia, that is how every lady would like a man to love her."

And then Gavinia beamed. "I'm glad you say that," she said, "for though I wouldna tell Corp for worlds, I fell likit it."

But Grizel told Corp that Gavinia liked it.

"It was the proof," she said, smiling, "that you have the right to marry her. You have shown your ticket. Never give it up, Corp."

About a year afterward Corp, armed in his Sunday stand, rushed to Grizel's house, occasionally stopping to slap his shiny knees. "Grizel," he cried, "there's somebody come to Thrums without a ticket!" Then he remembered Gavinia's instructions. "Mrs. Shiach's compliments," he said, ponderously, "and it's a boy."

"Oh, Corp!" exclaimed Grizel, and immediately began to put on her hat and jacket.

Corp watched her uneasily. "Mrs. Shiach's compliments," he said, firmly, "and he's ower young to be bathed yet. But she's awid to show him off to you," he hastened to add. "'Tell Grizel,' was her first words."

Tell Grizel! They were among the first words of many mothers. None, they were aware, would receive the news with quite such glee as she. They might think her cold and reserved with themselves, but to see the look on her face as she bent over a baby, and to know that the baby was yours! What a way she had with them! She always welcomed them as if in coming they had performed a great feat. That is what babies are agape for from the beginning. Had they been able to speak they would have said, "Tell Grizel" themselves.

"And Mrs. Shiach's compliments," Corp remembered, "and she would be windy if you would carry the bairn at the christening."

"I should love it, Corp! Have you decided on the name?"

"Lang syne. Gin it were a lassie we were to call her Grizel——"

"Oh, how sweet of you!"

"After the finest lassie we ever kent," continued Corp, stoutly. "But I was sure it would be a laddie."

"Why?"

"Because if it was a laddie it was to be called after him," he said, with emphasis on the last word; "and thinks I to mysel', 'He'll find a way.' What a crittur he was for finding a way, Grizel! and he lookit so holy a' the time. Do you mind that

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swear-word o' his, 'Stroke'? It just meant damn, but he could make even damn look holy."

"You are to call the baby Tommy?"

"He'll be christened Thomas Sandys Shiach," said Corp. "I hankered after putting something out o' the Jacobites intil his name, and I says to Gavinia, 'Let's call him Thomas Sandys Stroke Shiach?' says I, 'and the minister'll be nane the wiser,' but Gavinia was scandalized."

Grizel reflected. "Corp," she said, "I am sure Gavinia's sister will expect to be asked to carry the baby. I don't think I want to do it."

"After you promised!" cried Corp, much hurt. "I never kent you to break a promise afore."

"I will do it, Corp," she said, at once.

She did not know then that Tommy would be in church to witness the ceremony, but she knew before she walked down the aisle with T. S. Shiach in her arms. It was the first time that Tommy and she had seen each other for seven years. That day he almost rivalled his namesake in the interests of the congregation, who, however, took prodigious care that he should not see it. All except Grizel. She smiled a welcome to him, and he knew that her serene gray eyes were watching him.

CHAPTER V

THE TOMMY MYTH



IN the previous evening Aaron Latta, his head sunk farther into his shoulders, his beard gone grayer, no other perceptible difference in a dreary man since we last saw him in the book of Tommy's boyhood, had met the brother and sister at the station, a barrow with him for their luggage. It was a great hour for him as he wheeled the barrow homeward, Elspeth once more by his side, but he could say nothing heartsome in Tommy's presence and Tommy was as uncomfortable in his. The old strained relations between these two seemed to begin again at once. They were as self-conscious as two mastiffs meeting in the street and both

breathed a sigh of relief when Tommy fell behind.

"You're bonny, Elspeth," Aaron then said, eagerly. "I'm glad, glad to see you again."

"And him, too, Aaron?" Elspeth pleaded.

"He took you away frae me."

"He has brought me back."

"Ay, and he has but to whistle to you and away you go wi' him again. He's ower grand to bide lang here now."

"You don't know him, Aaron. We are to stay a long time. Do you know Mrs. McLean invited us to stay with her? I suppose she thought your house was so small; but Tommy said, 'The house of the man who befriended us when we were children shall never be too small for us.'"

"Did he say that? Ay, but, Elspeth, I would rather hear what you said."

"I said it was to dear, good Aaron Latta I was going back and to no one else."

"God bless you for that, Elspeth."

"And Tommy," she went on, "must have his old garret-room again, to write as well as sleep in, and the little room you partitioned off the kitchen will do nicely for me."

"There's no a window in it," replied Aaron, "but it will do fine for you, Elspeth." He was almost chuckling, for he had a surprise in waiting for her. "This way," he said, excitedly, when she would have gone into the kitchen, and he flung open the door of what had been his warping-room. The warping mill was gone, everything that had been there was gone; what met the delighted eyes of Elspeth and Tommy was a cosy parlor, which became a bedroom when you opened that other door.

"You are a leddy now, Elspeth," Aaron said, husky with pride, "and you have a leddy's room. Do you see the piano?"

He had given up the warping, having at last "twa three hunder" in the bank, and all the work he did now was at a loom which he had put into the kitchen to keep him out of languor. "I have sorted up the garret, too, for you," he said to Tommy, "but this is Elspeth's room."

"As if Tommy would take it from me!" said Elspeth, running into the kitchen to hug this dear Aaron.

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"You may laugh," Aaron replied, vindictively, "but he is taking it frae you already;" and later, when Tommy was out of the way, he explained his meaning: "I did it all for you, Elspeth; Elspeth's room I called it; when I bought the mahogany arm-chair, 'That's Elspeth's chair,' I says to mysel', and when I bought the bed, 'it's hers,' I said; ay, but I was soon disannulled o' that thait, for in spite of me, they were all got for him. Not a rissom in that room is yours or mine, Elspeth; every muhlen belongs to him."

"But who says so, Aaron? I am sure he won't."

"I dinna ken them. They are leddies that come here in their carriages to see the house where Thomas Sandys was born."

"But, Aaron, he was born in London!"

"They think he was born in this house," Aaron replied, doggedly, "and it's no for me to cheapen him."

"Oh, Aaron, you pretend——"

"I was never very fond o' him," Aaron admitted, "but I winna cheapen Jean Myles's bairn, and when they chap at my door and say they would like to see the room Thomas Sandys was born in I let them see the best room I have. So that's how he has laid hands on your parlor, Elspeth. Afore I can get rid o' them they gie a squeak and cry 'Was that Thomas Sandys's bed?' and I says it was. That's him taking the very bed frae you, Elspeth."

"You might at least have shown them his bed in the garret," she said.

"It's a shilpit bit thing," he answered, "and I winna cheapen him. They're curious, too, to see his favorite seat."

"It was the fender," she declared.

"It was," he assented, "but it's no for me to cheapen him, so I let them see your new mahogany chair. 'Thomas Sandys's chair' they call it, and they sit down in it reverently. They winna even leave you the piano. 'Was this Thomas Sandys's piano?' they speir. 'It was,' says I, and syne they gowp at it." His under lip shot out, a sure sign that he was angry. "I dinna blame him," he said, "but he had the same masterful way of scooping everything into his lap when he was a laddie, and I like him none the mair for it;" and from this position Aaron would not budge.

"Quite right, too," Tommy said when he heard of it. "But you can tell him, Elspeth, that we shall let no more of those prying women in;" and he really meant this, for he was a modest man that day, was Tommy. Nevertheless, he was, perhaps, a little annoyed to find, as the days went on, that no more ladies came to be turned away.

He heard that they had also been unable to resist the desire to shake hands with Thomas Sandys's schoolmaster. "It must have been a pleasure to teach him," they said to Cathro.

"Ah me, ah me!" Cathro replied, enigmatically. It had so often been a pleasure to Cathro to thrash him.

"Genius is odd," they said. "Did he ever give you any trouble?"

"We were like father and son," he assured them. With natural pride he showed them the ink-pot into which Thomas Sandys had dipped as a boy. They were very grateful for his interesting reminiscence that when the pot was too full Thomas inked his fingers. He presented several of them with the ink-pot.

Two ladies, who came together, bothered him by asking what the Hugh Blackadder competition was. They had been advised to inquire of him about Thomas Sandys's connection therewith by another schoolmaster, a Mr. Ogilvy, whom they had met in one of the glens.

Mr. Cathro winced, and then explained with emphasis that the Hugh Blackadder was a competition in which the local ministers were the sole judges. He therefore referred the ladies to them. The ladies did go to a local minister for enlightenment, to Mr. Dishart, but after reflecting, Mr. Dishart said that it was too long a story, and this answer seemed to amuse Mr. Ogilvy, who happened to be present.

It was Mr. McLean who retailed this news to Tommy. He and Ailie had walked home from church with the newcomers on the day after their arrival, the day of the christening. They had not gone into Aaron's house, for you are looked askance at in Thrums if you pay visits on Sundays, but they had stood for a long time gossiping at the door, which is permitted by the strictest. Ailie was in a twitter, as of old, and not able even yet to speak of her husband without an apolo-

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getic look to the ladies who had none, and, oh, how proud she was of Tommy's fame! Her eyes were an offering to him.

"Don't take her as a sample of the place, though," Mr. McLean warned him, "for Thrums does not catch fire so readily as London." It was quite true. "I was at the school wi' him," they said up there, and implied that this damned his book.

But there were two faithful souls, or more strictly one, for Corp could never have carried it through without Gavinia's help. Tommy called on them promptly at their house in the Bellies Brae (four rooms but a lodger), and said, almost before he had time to look, that the baby had Corp's chin and Gavinia's eyes. He had made this up on the way. He also wanted to say, so desirous was he of pleasing his old friends, that he should like to hold the baby in his arms, but it was such a thundering lie that even an author could not say it.

Tommy sat down in that house with a very warm heart for its inmates, but they chilled him, Gavinia with her stiff words and Corp by looking miserable instead of joyous.

"I expected you to come to me first, Corp," said Tommy, reproachfully. "I had scarcely a word with you at the station."

"He couldna hae presumed," replied Gavinia, primly.

"I couldna hae presumed," said Corp, with a groan.

"Fudge!" Tommy said. "You were my greatest friend, and I like you as much as ever, Corp."

Corp's face shone, but Gavinia said at once, "You werna sic great friends as that. Were you, man?"

"No," Corp replied, gloomily.

"Whatever has come over you both?" asked Tommy, in surprise. "You will be saying next, Gavinia, that we never played at Jacobites in the den!"

"I dinna deny that Corp and me played," Gavinia answered, determinedly, "but you didna. You said to us, 'Think shame,' you said, 'to be playing vulgar games when you could be reading superior books.' They were his very words, were they no, man?" she demanded of her unhappy husband, with a threatening look.

"They were," said Corp in deepest gloom.

"I must get to the bottom of this," said Tommy, rising, "and as you are too great a coward, Corp, to tell the truth, with that shameless woman glowering at you, out you go, Gavinia, and take your disgraced bairn with you. Do as you are told, you besom, for I am Captain Stroke again."

Corp was choking with delight as Gavinia withdrew haughtily. "I was sure you would sort her," he said, rubbing his hands, "I was sure you wasna the kind to be ashamed o' auld friends."

"But what does it mean?"

"She has a notion," Corp explained, growing grave again, "that it wouldna do for you to own the like o' us. 'We mauna cheapen him,' she said. She wanted you to see that we hinna been cheapening you." He said, in a sepulchral voice, "There has been leddies here, and they want to ken what Thomas Sandys was like as a boy. It's me they speir for, but Gavinia she just shoves me out o' sight, and, says she, 'Leave them to me.'"

Corp told Tommy some of the things Gavinia said about Thomas Sandys as a boy, how he sat rapt in church, and instead of going bird-nesting, lay on the ground listening to the beautiful little warblers overhead, and gave all his pennies to poorer children, and could repeat the shorter Catechism, beginning at either end, and was very respectful to the aged and infirm, and of a yielding disposition, and said, from his earliest years, 'I don't want to be great, I just want to be good.'

"How can she make them all up?" Tommy asked, with respectful homage to Gavinia.

Corp, with his eye on the door, produced from beneath the bed a little book with colored pictures. It was entitled, "Great Boyhoods," by Aunt Martha. "She doesna make them up," he whispered, "she gets them out o' this."

"And you back her up, Corp, even when she says I was not your friend!"

"It was like a t'knife intil me," replied loyal Corp, "every time I forswore you it was like a t'knife, but I did it, ay, and I'll go on doing it if you think my friendship cheapens you."

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Tommy was much moved, and gripped his old lieutenant by the hand. He also called Gavinia ben, and before she could ward him off, the masterful rogue had saluted her on the cheek. "That," said Tommy, "is to show you that I am as fond of the old times and my old friends as ever, and the moment you deny it I shall take you to mean, Gavinia, that you want another kiss."

"He's just the same!" Corp remarked, ecstatically, when Tommy had gone.

"I dinna deny," Gavinia said, "but what he's fell taking," and for a time they ruminated.

"Gavinia," said Corp, suddenly, "I wouldna wonder but what he's a gey lad wi' the women!"

"What makes you think that?" she replied, coldly, and he had the prudence not to say. He should have followed his hero home, to be disabused of this monstrous notion, for even while it was being propounded Tommy was sitting in such an agony of silence in a woman's presence that she could not resist smiling a crooked smile at him. His want of words did not displease Grizel; she was of opinion that young men should always be a little awed by young ladies.

He had found her with Elspeth on his return home. Would Grizel call and be friendly, he had asked himself many times since he saw her in church yesterday, and Elspeth was as curious; each wanted to know what the other thought of her, but neither had the courage to inquire, they both wanted to know so much. Her name had been mentioned, but casually, not a word to indicate that she had grown up since they saw her last. The longer Tommy remained silent the more, he knew, did Elspeth suspect him. He would have liked to say, in a careless voice, "Rather pretty, isn't she?" but he felt that this little Elspeth would see through him at once.

For at the first glance he had seen what Grizel was, and a thrill of joy passed through him as he drank her in, it was but the joy of the eyes for the first moment, but it ran to his heart to say, "This is the little hunted girl that was!" and Tommy was moved with a manly gladness that the girl who once was so fearful of the future had grown into this. The same unselfish delight in her for her own sake

came over him again when he shook hands with her in Aaron's parlor. This glorious creature with the serene eyes and the noble shoulders had been the hunted child of the Double Dykes; he would have liked to race back into the past and bring little Grizel here to look. How many boyish memories he recalled, and she was in every one of them. His heart held nothing but honest joy in this meeting after so many years; he longed to tell her how sincerely he was still her friend. Well, why don't you tell her, Tommy, it is a thing you are good at, and you have been polishing up the phrases ever since she passed down the aisle with Master Shiach in her arms; you have even planned out a way of putting Grizel at her ease, and behold, she is the only one of the three who is at ease. What has come over you? Does the reader think it was love? No, it was only that pall of shyness; he tried to fling it off, but could not; behold Tommy being buried alive.

Elspeth showed less contemptibly than her brother, but it was Grizel who did most of the talking. She nodded her head and smiled at Tommy, but she was watching him all the time. She wore a dress in which brown and yellow mingled as in woods on an autumn day, and the jacket had a high collar of fur, over which she watched him. Let us say that she was watching to see whether any of the old Tommy was left in him. Yet with this problem confronting her she also had time to study the outer man, Tommy the dandy, his velvet jacket (a new one), his brazen waistcoat, his poetic neckerchief, his spotless linen. His velvet jacket was to become the derision of Thrums, but Tommy took his bonneting haughtily, like one who was glad to suffer for a Cause. There were to be meetings here and there where people told with awe how many shirts he sent weekly to the wash. Grizel disdained his dandy tastes; why did not Elspeth strip him of them? and, oh, if he must wear that absurd waistcoat, could she not see that it would look another thing if the second button was put half an inch farther back! How sinful of him to spoil the shape of his silly velvet jacket by carrying so many letters in the pockets. She learned afterward that he carried all those letters because there was a check in one of them, he did not know which,

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and her sense of orderliness was outraged. Elspeth did not notice these things. She helped Tommy by her helplessness. There is reason to believe that once in London when she had need of a new hat, but money there was none, Tommy, looking very defiant, studied ladies' hats in the shop-windows, brought all his intellect to bear on them, with the result that he did concoct out of Elspeth's old hat a new one which was the admired of O. P. Pym and friends, who never knew the name of the artist. But obviously he could not take proper care of himself, and there is a kind of woman, of whom Grizel was one, to whose breasts this helplessness makes an unfair appeal. Oh, to dress him properly! She could not help liking to be a mother to men, she wanted them to be the most noble characters, but completely dependent on her.

Tommy walked home with her, and it seemed at first as if Elspeth's absence was to be no help to him. He could not even plagiarize from 'Sandys on Woman.' No one knew so well the kind of thing he should be saying, and no one could have been more anxious to say it, but a weight of shyness sat on the lid of Tommy. Having for half an hour raged internally at his misfortune, he now sullenly embraced it. "If I am this sort of an ass, let me be it in the superlative degree," he may be conceived saying bitterly to himself. He addressed Grizel coldly, as "Miss McQueen," a name she had taken by the doctor's wish soon after she went to live with him.

"There is no reason why you should call me that," she said. "Call me Grizel, as you used to do."

"May I?" replied Tommy, idiotically. He knew it was idiotic, but that mood now had grip of him.

"But I mean to call you Mr. Sandys," she said, decisively.

He was really glad to hear it, for to be called Tommy by anyone was now detestable to him (which is why I always call him Tommy in these pages). So it was like him to say, with a sigh, "I had hoped to hear you use the old name."

That sigh made her look at him sharply. He knew that he must be careful with Grizel and that she was irritated, but he had to go on.

"It is strange to me," said Sentimental

Tommy, "to be back here after all those years, walking this familiar road once more with you. I thought it would make me feel myself a boy again, but, heigh ho, it has just the opposite effect, I never felt so old as I do to-day."

His voice trembled a little, I don't know why. Grizel frowned.

"But you never were as old as you are to-day, were you?" she inquired, politely. It whisked Tommy out of dangerous waters and laid him at her feet. He laughed, not perceptibly or audibly, of course, but somewhere inside him the bell rang. No one could laugh more heartily at himself than Tommy, and none bore less malice to those who brought him to land.

"That, at any rate, makes me feel younger," he said, candidly; and now the shyness was in full flight.

"Why?" asked Grizel, still watchful.

"It is so like the kind of thing you used to say to me when we were boy and girl. I used to enrage you very much, I fear," he said, half gleefully.

"Yes," she admitted with a smile, "you did."

"And then how you rocked your arms at me, Grizel! Do you remember?"

She remembered it all so well!

"Do you ever rock them now when people annoy you?" he asked.

"There has been no one to annoy me," she replied, demurely, "since you went away."

"But I have come back," Tommy said, looking hopefully at her arms.

"You see they take no notice of you."

"They don't remember me yet. As soon as they do they will cry out."

Grizel shook her head confidently, and in this she was pitting herself against Tommy, always a bold thing to do.

"I have been to see Corp's baby," he said, suddenly, and this was so important that she stopped in the middle of the road.

"What do you think of him?" she asked, quite anxiously.

"I thought," replied Tommy, gravely, and making use of one of Grizel's pet phrases, "I thought he was just sweet."

"Isn't he!" she cried, and then she knew that he was making fun of her. Her arms rocked.

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"Hurray!" cried Tommy, "they recognize me now! Don't be angry, Grizel," he begged her, "you taught me long ago what was the right thing to say about babies, and how could I be sure it was you until I saw your arms rocking."

"It was so like you," she said, reproachfully, "to try to make me do it."

"It was so unlike you," he replied, craftily, "to let me succeed. And, after all, Grizel, if I was horrid in the old days I always apologized."

"Never!" she insisted.

"Well, then," said Tommy, handsomely, "I do so now," and then they both laughed gayly, and I think Grizel was not sorry that there was a little of the boy who had been horrid left in Tommy, just enough to know him by.

"He'll be vain?" her aged maid, Maggy Ann, said curiously to her that evening. They were all curious about Tommy.

"I don't know that he is vain," Grizel replied, guardedly.

"If he's no vain," Maggy Ann retorted, "he's the first son of Adam it could be said o'. I jalouse it's his bit book."

"He scarcely mentioned it."

"Ay, then, it's his beard."

Grizel was sure it was not that.

"Then it'll be the women," said Maggy Ann.

"Who knows!" said Grizel of the watchful eyes, but she smiled to herself. She thought not incorrectly that she knew one woman of whom Mr. Sandys was a little afraid.

About the same time Tommy and Elspeth were discussing her. Elspeth was in bed, and Tommy had come into the room to kiss her good-night—he had never once omitted doing it since they went to London, and he was always to do it, for neither of them was ever to marry.

"What do you think of her?" Elspeth asked. This was their great time for confidences.

"Of whom?" Tommy inquired.

"Grizel."

It behooved Tommy to be careful.

"Rather pretty, don't you think?" he said, gazing at the ceiling.

She was looking at him keenly, but he managed to deceive her. She was much relieved, and could say what was in her heart. "Tommy," she said, "I think

she is the most noble-looking girl I ever saw, and if she were not so masterful in her manner she would be beautiful." It was nice of Elspeth to say it, for she and Grizel were never very great friends.

Tommy brought down his eyes. "Did you think as much of her as that?" he said. "It struck me that her features were not quite classic. Her nose is a little tilted, is it not?"

"Some people like that kind of nose," replied Elspeth.

"It is not classic," Tommy said, sternly.

CHAPTER VI

GHOSTS THAT HAUNT THE DEN



LOOKING through the Tommy papers of this period, like a conscientious biographer, I find among them manuscripts that remind me how diligently he set to work the moment he went North, and also letters, which, if printed, would show you what a wise and good man Tommy was. But while I was fingering those there floated from them to the floor a loose page, and when I saw that it was a chemist's bill for oil and liniment I remembered something I had nigh forgotten. "Eureka!" I cried, "I shall tell the story of the chemist's bill, and some other biographer may print the letters."

Well, well, but to think that this scrap of paper should flutter into view to damn him after all those years!

The date is Saturday, May 28th, by which time Tommy had been a week in Thrums without doing anything very reprehensible, so far as Grizel knew. She watched for telltales as for a mouse to show at its hole, and at the worst, I think, she saw only its little head. That was when Tommy was talking beautifully to her about her dear doctor. He would have done wisely to avoid this subject, but he was so notoriously good at condolences that he had to say it. He had thought it out, you may remember, a year ago, but hesitated to post it, and since then it had lain heavily within him, as if it knew it was a good thing and pined to be up and strutting.

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He said it with emotion ; evidently Dr. McQueen had been very dear to him, and any other girl would have been touched, but Grizel stiffened, and when he had finished this is what she said, quite snappily :

“ He never liked you.”

Tommy was taken aback, but replied, with gentle dignity, “ Do you think, Grizel, I would let that make any difference in my estimate of him ! ”

“ But you never liked him,” said she, and now that he thought of it, this was true also. It was useless to say anything about the artistic instinct to her, she did not know what it was, and would have had plain words for it as soon as he told her. Please to picture Tommy picking up his beautiful speech and ramming it back into his pocket as if it were a rejected manuscript.

“ I am sorry you should think so meanly of me, Grizel,” he said with manly forbearance, and when she thought it all out carefully that night she decided that she had been hasty. She could not help watching Tommy for back-slidings, but, oh, it was sweet to her to decide that she had not found any.

“ It was I who was horrid,” she announced to him frankly, and Tommy forgave her at once. She offered him a present. “ When the doctor died I gave some of his things to his friends, it is the Scotch custom, you know. He had a new overcoat, it had been worn but two or three times, I should be so glad if you would let me give it to you for saying such sweet things about him. I think it will need very little alteration.”

Thus very simply came into Tommy's possession the coat that was to play so odd a part in his history. “ But, oh, Grizel,” said he with mock reproach, “ you need not think that I don't see through you ! Your deep design is to cover me up. You despise my velvet jacket ! ”

“ It does not—” Grizel began, and stopped.

“ It is not in keeping with my doleful countenance,” said Tommy, candidly, “ that was what you were to say. Let me tell you a secret, Grizel, I wear it to spite my face. Sha'n't give up my velvet jacket for anybody, Grizel ; not even for you.” He was in gay spirits because he knew she liked him again, and she saw

that was the reason and it warmed her. She was least able to resist Tommy when he was most a boy, and it was actually watchful Grizel who proposed that he and she and Elspeth should revisit the den together. How often since the days of their childhood had Grizel wandered it alone, thinking of those dear times, making up her mind that if ever Tommy asked her to go into the den again with him she would not go, the place was so much sweeter to her than it could be to him. And yet it was Grizel herself who was saying now, “ Let us go back to the den.”

Tommy caught fire. “ We sha'n't go back,” he cried, defiantly, “ as men and women ; let us be boy and girl again, Grizel, let us have that Saturday we missed long ago. I missed a Saturday on purpose, Grizel, so that we should have it now.”

She shook her head wistfully, but she was glad that Tommy would fain have had one of the Saturdays back. Had he waxed sentimental she would not have gone a step of the way with him into the past, but when he was so full of glee she could take his hand and run back into it.

“ But we must wait until evening,” Tommy said, “ until Corp is unharnessed ; we must not hurt the feelings of Corp by going back to the den without him.”

“ How mean of me not to think of Corp ! ” Grizel cried ; but the next moment she was glad she had not thought of him, it was so delicious to have proof that Tommy was more loyal.

“ But we can't turn back the clock, can we, Corp ? ” she said to the fourth of the conspirators, to which Corp replied, with his old sublime confidence, “ He'll find a way.”

And at first it really seemed as if Tommy had found a way. They did not go to the den, four in a line or two abreast, nothing so common as that. In the wild spirits that mastered him he seemed to be the boy incarnate, and it was always said of Tommy by those who knew him best that if he leapt back into boyhood they had to jump with him. Those who knew him best were with him now. He took command of them in the old way. He whispered, as if Black Cathro were still on the prowl for him. Corp of Corp had to steal upon the den by way of the Silent

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Pool, Grizel by the Queen's Bower, Elspeth up the burn side, Captain Stroke down the Reekie Brothpot. Grizel's arms rocked with delight in the dark, and she was on her way to the Cuttle Well, the trysting-place, before she came to and saw with consternation that Tommy had been ordering her about.

She was quite a sedate young lady by the time she joined them at the well, and Tommy was the first to feel the change. "Don't you think this is all rather silly," she said, when he addressed her as the Lady Griselda, and it broke the spell. Two girls shot up into women, a beard grew on Tommy's chin, and Corp became a father. Grizel had blown Tommy's pretty project to dust just when he was most gleeful over it, yet instead of bearing resentment he pretended not even to know that she was the culprit.

"Corp," he said, ruefully, "the game is up!" And "Listen," he said, when they had sat down, crushed, by the old Cuttle Well, "do you hear anything?"

It was a very still evening. "I hear nocht," said Corp, "but the trickle o' the burn. What did you hear?"

"I thought I heard a baby cry," replied Tommy, with a groan, "I think it was your baby, Corp. Did you hear it, Grizel?"

She understood, and nodded.

"And you, Elspeth?"

"Yes."

"My bairn!" cried the astounded Corp.

"Yours," said Tommy, reproachfully, "and he has done for us. Ladies and gentlemen, the game is up."

Yes, the game was up, and she was glad, Grizel said to herself, as they made their melancholy pilgrimage of what had once been an enchanted land. But she felt that Tommy had been very forbearing to her, and that she did not deserve it. Undoubtedly he had ordered her about, but in so doing had he not been making half-pathetic sport of his old self, and was it with him that she was annoyed for ordering, or with herself for obeying? And why should she not obey when it was all a jest? It was as if she still had some lingering fear of Tommy. Oh, she was ashamed of herself. She must say something nice to him at once. About what?

About his book, of course. How base of her not to have done so already, but how good of him to have overlooked her silence on that great topic.

It was not ignorance of its contents that had kept her silent; to confess the horrid truth, Grizel had read the book suspiciously, looking as through a microscope for something wrong, hoping not to find it, but looking minutely. The book, she knew, was beautiful, but it was the writer of the book she was peering for; the Tommy she had known so well, what had he grown into? In her heart she had exulted from the first, in his success, and she should have been still more glad (should she not?) to learn that his subject was woman, but no, that had irritated her, what was perhaps even worse, she had been still more irritated on hearing that the work was rich in sublime thoughts. As a boy, he had maddened her most in his grandest moments. I can think of no other excuse for her.

She would not accept it as an excuse for herself now. What she saw with scorn was that she was always suspecting the worst of Tommy. Very probably there was not a thought in the book that had been put in with his old complacent waggle of the head. "Oh, am I not a wonder!" he used to cry when he did anything big, but that was no reason why she should suspect him of being conceited still. Very probably he really and truly felt what he wrote, felt it not only at the time, but also next morning. In his boyhood, Mr. Cathro had christened him Sentimental Tommy, but he was a man now, and surely the sentimentalities in which he had dressed himself were flung aside forever like old suits of clothes. So Grizel decided eagerly, and she was on the point of telling him how proud she was of his book, when Tommy, who had thus far behaved so well, of a sudden went to pieces.

He and Grizel were together, Elspeth was a little in front of them, walking with a gentleman who still wondered what they meant by saying that they had heard his baby cry. "For he's no here," Corp had said earnestly to them all, "though I'm awid for the time to come when I'll be able to bring him to the den and let him see the Jacobites' lair."

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There was nothing startling in this remark, so far as Grizel could discover, but she saw that it had an immediate and incomprehensible effect on Tommy. First, he blundered in his talk as if he was thinking deeply of something else, then his face shone as it had been wont to light up in his boyhood when he was suddenly enraptured with himself, and lastly down his cheek and into his beard there stole a tear of agony. Obviously, Tommy was in deep woe for somebody or something.

It was a chance for a true lady to show that womanly sympathy of which such exquisite things are said in the first work of T. Sandys, but it merely infuriated Grizel, who knew that Tommy did not feel nearly so deeply as she this return to the den, and therefore what was he in such distress about? It was silly sentiment of some sort, she was sure of that. In the old days she would have asked him imperiously to tell her what was the matter with him, but she must not do that now, she dare not even rock her indignant arms, she could walk silently only by his side, longing fervently to shake him.

He had quite forgotten her presence; indeed, she was not really there, for a number of years had passed and he was Corp Shiach walking the den alone. Tomorrow he was to bring his boy to show him the old lair and other fondly remembered spots, to-night he must revisit them alone. So he set out blithely, but to his bewilderment he could not find the lair. It had not been a tiny hollow where muddy water gathered, he remembered an impregnable fortress full of men whose armor rattled as they came and went, so this could not be the lair. He had taken the wrong way to it, for the way was across a lagoon, up a deep-flowing river, then by horse till the rocky ledge terrified all four-footed things; no, up a grassy slope had never been the way. He came night after night trying different ways, but he could not find the golden ladder, though all the time he knew that the lair lay somewhere over there. When he stood still and listened he could hear the friends of his youth at play, and they seemed to be calling, "Are you coming, Corp? why does not Corp come back?" but he could never see them, and when he pressed forward their voices died away. Then at last he

said, sadly to his boy, "I shall never be able to show you the lair, for I cannot find the way to it," and the boy was touched, and he said, "Take my hand, father, and I will lead you to the lair; I found the way long ago for myself."

It took Tommy about two seconds to see all this, and perhaps another half minute was spent in sad but satisfactory contemplation of it. Then he felt that for the best effect Corp's home life was too comfortable, so Gavinia ran away with a soldier. He was now so sorry for Corp that the tears rolled down. But at the same moment he saw how the effect could be still further heightened by doing away with his friend's rude state of health, and he immediately jammed him between the buffers of two railway carriages and gave him a wooden leg. It was at this point that a lady who had kept her arms still too long rocked them frantically, then said, with cutting satire, "Are you not feeling well, or have you hurt yourself? You seem to be very lame," and Tommy woke with a start to see that he was hobbling as if one of his legs were timber to the knee.

"It is nothing," he said, modestly, "something Corp said set me thinking. That is all."

He had told the truth, and if what he imagined was twenty times more real to him than what was really there, how could Tommy help it? Indignant Grizel, however, who kept such a grip of facts, would make no such excuse for him.

"Elsbeth!" she called.

"There is no need to tell her," said Tommy, but Grizel was obdurate.

"Come here, Elspeth," she cried, vindictively, "something Corp said a moment ago has made your brother lame."

Tommy was lame, that was all Elspeth and Corp heard or could think of as they ran back to him. When did it happen? Was he in great pain? Had he fallen? Oh, why had he not told Elspeth at once?

"It is nothing," Tommy insisted, a little fiercely.

"He says so," Grizel explained, "not to alarm us. But he is suffering horribly. Just before I called to you his face was all drawn up in pain."

This made the sufferer wince. "That was another twinge," she said, promptly. "What is to be done, Elspeth?"

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"I think I could carry him," suggested Corp with a forward movement that made Tommy stamp his foot, the wooden one.

"I am all right," he told them, testily, and looking uneasily at Grizel.

"How brave of you to say so," said she.

"It is just like him," Elspeth said, pleased with Grizel's remark.

"I am sure it is," Grizel said, so graciously.

It was very naughty of her. Had she given him a chance he would have explained that it was all a mistake of Grizel's. That had been his intention, but now a devil entered into Tommy and spoke for him.

"I must have slipped and sprained my ankle," he said. "It is slightly painful, but I shall be able to walk home all right, Corp, if you let me use you as a staff."

I think he was a little surprised to hear himself saying this, but as soon as it was said he liked it. He was Captain Stroke playing in the den again after all, and playing as well as ever. Nothing being so real to Tommy as pretence, I daresay he even began to feel his ankle hurting him. "Gently," he begged of Corp, with a gallant smile and clenching his teeth so that the pain should not make him cry out before the ladies. Thus with his lieutenant's help did Stroke manage to reach Aaron's house, making light of his mishap, assuring them cheerily that he should be all right to-morrow and carefully avoiding

Grizel's eye, though he wanted very much to know what she thought of him (and of herself) now.

There were moments when she did not know what to think, and that always distressed Grizel, though it was a state of mind with which Tommy could keep on very friendly terms. The truth seemed too monstrous for belief. Was it possible she had misjudged him? Perhaps he really had sprained his ankle. But he had made no pretence of that at first, and besides, yes, she could not be mistaken, it was the other leg.

She soon let him see what she was thinking. "I am afraid it is too serious a case for me," she said, in answer to a suggestion from Corp, who had a profound faith in her medical skill, "but if you like—" she was addressing Tommy now—"I shall call at Dr. Gemmell's on my way home, and ask him to come to you."

"There is no necessity, a night's rest is all I need," he answered, hastily.

"Well, you know best," she said, and there was a look on her face which Thomas Sandys could endure from no woman.

"On second thoughts," he said, "I think it would be advisable to have a doctor. Thank you very much, Grizel. Corp, can you help me to lift my foot on to that chair. Softly—ah!—ugh!"

His eyes did not fall before hers. "And would you mind asking him to come at once, Grizel?" he said, sweetly.

She went straight to the doctor.



TOMMY AND GRIZEL

BY J. M. BARRIE

Author of "Sentimental Tommy," "The Little Minister," etc.

CHAPTER VII

THE BEGINNING OF THE DUEL



It was among old Dr. McQueen's sayings that when he met a man who was certified to be in no way remarkable he wanted to give three cheers. There are few of them, even in a little place like Thrums, but David Gemmell was one.

So McQueen had always said, but Grizel was not so sure. "He is very good-looking and he does not know it," she would point out, "oh, what a remarkable man!"

She had known him intimately for nearly six years now, ever since he became the old doctor's assistant, on the day when, in the tail of some others, he came to Thrums aged twenty-one to apply for the post. Grizel had even helped to choose him, she had a quaint recollection of his being submitted to her by McQueen, who told her to look him over and say whether he would do—an odd position in which to place a fourteen-year-old girl, but Grizel had taken it most seriously, and indeed of the two men only Gemmell dared to laugh.

"You should not laugh when it is so important," she said, gravely; and he stood abashed, although I believe he chuckled again when he retired to his room for the night. She was in that room next morning as soon as he had left it, to smell the curtains (he smoked) and see whether he folded his things up neatly and used both the brush and the comb, but did not use pomade, and slept with his window open, and really took a bath instead of merely pouring the water into it and laying the sponge on top—(oh, she knew them!)—and her decision after some days was that though far from perfect, he would do, if he loved her dear darling doctor

sufficiently. By this time David was openly afraid of her, which Grizel noticed, and took to be in the circumstances a satisfactory sign.

She watched him narrowly for the next year, and after that she ceased to watch him at all. She was like a congregation become so sure of its minister's soundness that it can risk going to sleep. To begin with, he was quite incapable of pretending to be anything he was not. Oh, how unlike a boy she had once known! His manner, like his voice, was quiet; being himself the son of a doctor, he did not dodder through life amazed at the splendid eminence he had climbed to, which is the weakness of Scottish students when they graduate, and often for fifty years afterwards. How sweet he was to Dr. McQueen, never forgetting the respect due to gray hairs, never hinting that the new school of medicine knew many things that were hidden from the old, and always having the sense to support McQueen when she was scolding him for his numerous naughty ways. When the old doctor came home now on cold nights it was not with his cravat in his pocket, and Grizel knew very well who had put it round his neck. McQueen never had the humiliation, so distressing to an old doctor, of being asked by patients to send his assistant instead of coming himself. He thought they preferred him and twitted David about it, but Grizel knew that David had sometimes to order them to prefer the old man. She knew that when he said good-night and was supposed to have gone to his lodgings, he was probably off to some poor house where, if not he, a tired woman must sit the long night through by a sufferer's bedside, and she realized with joy that his chief reason for not speaking of such things was that he took them as part of his natural work and never even knew that he was kind. He was not specially skilful, he had taken no

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honors either at school or college, and he considered himself to be a very ordinary young man. If you had said that on this point you disagreed with him, his manner probably would have implied that he thought you a bit of an ass.

When a new man arrives in Thrums, the women come to their doors to see whether he is good-looking. They said No of Tommy when he came back, but it had been an emphatic Yes for Dr. Gemmell. He was tall and very slight, and at twenty-seven as at twenty-one, despite the growth of a heavy mustache, there was a boyishness about his appearance, which is, I think, what women love in a man more than anything else. They are drawn to him by it, and they love him out of pity when it goes. I suppose it brings back to them some early, beautiful stage in the world's history when men and women played together without fear. Perhaps it lay in his smile, which was so winning that wrinkled old dames spoke of it, who had never met the word before, smiles being little known in Thrums, where in a workaday world we find it sufficient either to laugh or to look thrawn. His dark curly hair was what Grizel was most suspicious of; he must be vain of that, she thought, until she discovered that he was quite sensitive to its being mentioned, having ever detested his curls as an eyesore and in his boyhood clipped savagely to the roots. He had such a firm chin, if there had been another such chin going a-begging, I should have liked to clap it on to Tommy Sandys.

Tommy Sandys! All this time we have been neglecting that brave sufferer, and while we talk his ankle is swelling and swelling. Well, Grizel was not so inconsiderate, for she walked very fast and with an exceedingly determined mouth to Dr. Gemmell's lodgings. He was still in lodgings, having refused to turn Grizel out of her house, though she had offered to let it to him. She left word, the doctor not being in, that he was wanted at once by Mr. Sandys, who had sprained his ankle.

Now, then, Tommy!

For an hour, perhaps until she went to bed, she remained merciless. She saw the quiet doctor with the penetrating eyes examining that ankle, asking a few ques-

tions, and looking curiously at his patient. Then she saw him lift his hat and walk out of the house.

It gave her pleasure, no, it did not. While she thought of this Tommy she despised, there came in front of him a boy who had played with her long ago when no other child would play with her, and now he said, "You have grown cold to me, Grizel," and she nodded assent, and little wells of water rose to her eyes and lay there because she had nodded assent.

She had never liked Dr. Gemmell so little as when she saw him approaching her house next morning. The surgery was still attached to it, and very often he came from there, his visiting-book in his hand, to tell her of his patients, even to consult her; indeed to talk to Grizel about his work without consulting her would have been difficult, for it was natural to her to decide what was best for everybody. These consultations were very unprofessional, but from her first coming to the old doctor's house she had taken it as a matter of course that in his practice, as in affairs relating to his boots and buttons, she should tell him what to do and he should do it. McQueen had introduced his assistant to this partnership half-shamefacedly and with a cautious wink over the little girl's head, and Gemmell fell into line at once, showing her his new stethoscope as gravely as if he must abandon it at once, should not she approve; which fine behavior, however, was quite thrown away on Grizel, who, had he conducted himself otherwise, would merely have wondered what was the matter with the man; and as she was eighteen or more before she saw that she had exceeded her duties, it was then, of course, too late to cease doing it.

She knew now how good, how forbearing he had been to the little girl, and that it was partly because he was acquainted with her touching history. The grave courtesy with which he had always treated her, and which had sometimes given her as a girl a secret thrill of delight, it was so sweet to Grizel to be respected, she knew now to be less his natural manner to women than something that came to him in her presence because he who knew her so well, thought her worthy of deference, and it helped her more, far more,

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than if she had seen it turn to love. Yet as she received him in her parlor now, her too spotless parlor, for not even the ashes in the grate were visible, which is a mistake, she was not very friendly. He had discovered what Tommy was, and as she had been the medium she could not blame him for that, but how could he look as calm as ever when such a deplorable thing had happened?

"What you say is true, I knew it before I asked you to go to him, and I knew you would find it out, but please to remember that he is a man of genius, whom it is not for such as you to judge."

That was the sort of haughty remark she held ready for him while they talked of other cases, but it was never uttered, for by and by he said:

"And then there is Mr. Sandys's ankle. A nasty accident, I am afraid."

Was he jesting? She looked at him sharply. "Have you not been to see him yet?" she asked.

He thought she had misunderstood him. He had been to see Mr. Sandys twice, both last night and this morning.

And he was sure it was a sprain?

Unfortunately it was something worse, dislocation. Further mischief might show itself presently.

"Hemorrhage into the neighboring joint on inflammation?" she asked, scornfully.

"Yes."

Grizel turned away from him. "I think not," she said.

Well, possibly not, if Mr. Sandys was careful and kept his foot from the ground for the next week. The doctor did not know that she was despising him, and he proceeded to pay Tommy a compliment. "I had to reduce the dislocation, of course," he told her, "and he bore the wrench splendidly, though there is almost no pain more acute."

"Did he ask you to tell me that?"

Grizel was thirsting to inquire, but she forbore. Unwittingly, however, the doctor answered the question. "I could see," he said, "that Mr. Sandys made light of his sufferings to save his sister pain. I cannot remember ever having seen a brother and sister so attached."

That was quite true, Grizel admitted to herself. In all her recollections of Tommy

she could not remember one critical moment in which Elspeth had not been foremost in his thoughts. It passed through her head, "Even now he must make sure that Elspeth is in peace of mind before he can care to triumph over me," and she would perhaps have felt less bitter had he put his triumph first.

His triumph! Oh, she would show him whether it was a triumph. He had destroyed forever her faith in David Gemmell; the quiet, observant doctor, who had such an eye for the false, had been deceived as easily as all the others, and it made her feel very lonely; but, never mind, Tommy should find out, and that within the hour, that there was one whom he could not cheat. Her first impulse, always her first impulse, was to go straight to his side and tell him what she thought of him; her second, which was neater, was to send by messenger her compliments to Mr. and Miss Sandys, and would they, if not otherwise engaged, come and have tea with her that afternoon? Not a word in the note about the ankle, but a careful sentence to the effect that she had seen Dr. Gemmell to-day and proposed asking him to meet them.

Maggy Ann, who had conveyed the message, came back with the reply. Elspeth regretted that they could not accept Grizel's invitation, owing to the accident to her brother being *very much more* serious than Grizel seemed to think. "I can't understand," Elspeth added, "why Dr. Gemmell did not tell you this when he saw you."

"Is it a polite letter?" asked inquisitive Maggy Ann, and Grizel assured her that it was most polite. "I hardly expected it," said the plain-spoken dame, "for I'm thinking by their manner it's more than can be said of yours."

"I merely invited them to come to tea."

"And him wi' his leg broke! Did you no ken he was lying on chairs?"

"I did not know it was so bad as that, Maggy Ann. So my letter seemed to annoy him, did it?" said Grizel, eagerly and I fear well pleased.

"It angered her most terrible," said Maggy Ann, "but no him. He gave a sort of a laugh when he read it."

"A laugh!"

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"Ay, and syne she says, 'It is most heartless of Grizel; she does not even ask how you are to-day; one would think she did not know of the accident,' and she says, 'I have a good mind to write her a very stiff letter,' and says he in a noble, melancholic voice, 'We must not hurt Grizel's feelings,' he says, and she says, 'Grizel thinks it was nothing because you bore it so cheerfully; oh, how little she knows you,' she says, and 'You are too forgiving,' she says; and says he, 'If I have anything to forgive Grizel for I forgive her willingly,' and syne she quieted down and wrote the letter."

Forgive her! Oh, how it enraged Grizel. How like the Tommy of old to put it in that way. There never had been a boy so good at forgiving people for his own crimes, and he always looked so modest when he did it. He was reclining on his chair at this moment, she was sure he was, forgiving her in every sentence. She could have endured it more easily had she felt sure that he was seeing himself as he was, but she remembered him too well to have any hope of that.

She put on her bonnet and took it off again; a terrible thing, remember, for Grizel to be in a state of indecision. For the remainder of that day she was not wholly inactive. Meeting Dr. Gemmell in the street she impressed upon him the advisability of not allowing Mr. Sandys to move for at least a week.

"He might take a drive in a day or two," the doctor thought, "with his sister."

"He would be sure to use his foot," Grizel maintained, "if you once let him rise from his chair; you know they all do," and Gemmell agreed that she was right. So she managed to give Tommy as irksome a time as possible.

But next day she called. To go through another day without letting him see how despicable she thought him was beyond her endurance. Elspeth was a little stiff at first, but Tommy received her heartily, and with nothing in his manner to show that she had hurt his finer feelings. His leg (the wrong leg, as Grizel remembered at once) was extended on a chair in front of him, but instead of nursing it ostentatiously as so many would have done, he made humorous remarks at its expense. "The fact is," he said, cheerily, "that so

long as I don't move I never felt better in my life. And I dare say I could walk almost as well as either of you, only my tyrant of a doctor won't let me try."

"He told me you had behaved splendidly," said Grizel, "while he was reducing the dislocation. How brave you are! You could not have endured more stoically though there had been nothing the matter with it."

"It was soon over," Tommy replied, lightly. "I think Elspeth suffered more than I."

Elspeth told the story of his heroism. "I could not stay in the room," she said, "it was too terrible," and Grizel despised too tender-hearted Elspeth for that, she was so courageous at facing pain herself. But Tommy had guessed that Elspeth was trembling behind the door, and he had called out, "Don't cry, Elspeth I am all right, it is nothing at all."

"How noble!" was Grizel's comment when she heard of this, and then Elspeth was her friend again, insisted on her staying to tea, and went into the kitchen to prepare it. Aaron was out.

The two were alone now, and in the circumstances some men would have given the lady the opportunity to apologize, if such was her desire. But Tommy's was a more generous nature, his manner was that of one less sorry to be misjudged than anxious that Grizel should not suffer too much from remorse, if she had asked his pardon then and there I am sure he would have replied, "Right willingly, Grizel," and begged her not to give another thought to the matter. What is of more importance Grizel was sure of this also, and it was the magnanimity of him that especially annoyed her. There seemed to be no disturbing it. Even when she said, "Which foot is it?" he answered, "The one on the chair," quite graciously as if she had asked a natural question.

Grizel pointed out that the other foot must be tired of being a foot in waiting. It had got a little exercise, Tommy replied lightly, last night and again this morning when it had helped to convey him to and from his bed.

Had he hopped? she asked, brutally.

No, he said, he had shuffled along. Half rising, he attempted to show her humorously how he walked nowadays, tried

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not to wince, but had to. Ugh, that was a twinge! Grizel sarcastically offered her assistance and he took her shoulder gratefully; they crossed the room, a tedious journey. "Now let me see if you can manage alone," she says, and suddenly deserts him.

He looked rather helplessly across the room; few sights are so pathetic as the strong man of yesterday feeling that the chair by the fire is a distant object to-day. Tommy knew how pathetic it was, but Grizel did not seem to know.

"Try it," she said, encouragingly, "it will do you good."

He got as far as the table and clung to it, his teeth set. Grizel clapped her hands. "Excellently done!" she said, with fell meaning, and recommended him to move up and down the room for a little, he would feel ever so much the better for it afterwards.

The pain—was—considerable, he said. Oh, she saw that, but he had already proved himself so good at bearing pain, and the new school of surgeons held that it was wise to exercise an injured limb.

Even then it was not a reproachful glance that Tommy gave her, though there was some sadness in it. He moved across the room several times, a groan occasionally escaping him. "Admirable!" said his critic, "bravo! would you like to stop now?"

"Not until you tell me to," he said, determinedly, but with a gasp.

"It must be dreadfully painful," she replied, coldly, "but I should like you to go on," and he went on until suddenly he seemed to have lost the power to lift his feet. His body swayed, there was an appealing look on his face. "Don't be afraid, you won't fall," said Grizel, but she had scarcely said it when he fainted dead away, and went down at her feet.

"Oh, how dare you!" she cried in sudden flame, and she drew back from him. But after a moment she knew that he was shamming no longer. Or she knew it and yet could not quite believe it, for hurrying out of the room for water she had no sooner passed the door than she swiftly put back her head as if to catch him unawares. But he lay motionless.

The sight of her dear brother on the floor paralyzed Elspeth, who could weep

only for him and call to him to look at her and speak to her, but in such an emergency Grizel was as useful as any doctor and by the time Gemmell arrived in haste the invalid was being brought to. The doctor was a practical man who did not ask questions while there was something better to do; had he asked any as he came in Grizel would certainly have said: "He wanted to faint to make me believe he really has a bad ankle, and somehow he managed to do it," and if the doctor had replied that people can't faint by wishing, she would have said that he did not know Mr. Sandys.

But with few words Gemmell got his patient back to the chairs, and proceeded to undo the bandages that were round his ankle. Grizel stood by, assisting silently; she had often assisted the doctors, but never with that scornful curl of the lip. So the bandages were removed and the ankle laid bare. It was very much swollen and discolored, and when Grizel saw this she gave a little cry and the ointment she was holding slipped from her hand; for the first time since he came to Thrums she had failed Gemmell at a patient's side.

"I had not expected it to be—like this," she said, in a quivering voice, when he looked at her in surprise.

"It will look much worse to-morrow," he assured them, grimly. "I can't understand, Miss Sandys, how this came about."

"Miss Sandys was not in the room," said Grizel, abjectly, "but I was, and I —"

Tommy's face was begging her to stop. He was still faint and in pain, but all thought of himself left him in his desire to screen her. "I owe you an apology, doctor," he said, quickly, "for disregarding your instructions. It was entirely my own fault, I would try to walk."

"Every step must have been agony," the doctor rapped out, and Grizel shuddered.

"Not nearly so bad as that," Tommy said, for her sake.

"Agony," insisted the doctor, as if for once he enjoyed the word. "It was a mad thing to do, as surely you could guess, Grizel. Why did you not prevent him?"

"She certainly did her best to stop me," Tommy said, hastily, "but I suppose I had

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some insane fit on me, for do it I would. I am very sorry, doctor."

His face was wincing with pain and he spoke faintly, but the doctor was still angry. He felt that there was something between these two which he did not understand, and it was strange to him and unpleasant to find Grizel unable to speak for herself. I think he doubted Tommy from that hour. All he said in reply, however, was, "It is unnecessary to apologize to me; you yourself are the only sufferer."

But was Tommy the only sufferer? Gemmell left, and Elspeth followed him to listen to those precious words which doctors drop, as from a vial, on the other side of a patient's door, and then Grizel, who had been standing at the window with head averted, turned slowly round and looked at the man she had wronged. Her arms, which had been hanging rigid, the fists closed, went out to him to implore forgiveness. I don't know how she held herself up and remained dry-eyed, her whole being wanted so much to sink by the side of his poor tortured foot and bathe it in her tears.

So, you see, he had won; nothing to do now but forgive her beautifully. Go on, Tommy, you are good at it.

But only the unexpected came out of Tommy. Never was there a softer heart. In London the old lady who sold matches at the street-corner had got all his pence; had he heard her, or any other, mourning a son sentenced to the gallows, he would immediately have wondered whether he might take the condemned one's place. (What a speech Tommy could have delivered from the scaffold!) There was nothing he would not jump at doing for a woman in distress, except perhaps destroy his note-book. And Grizel was in anguish, she was his suppliant, his brave lonely little playmate of the past, the noble girl of to-day, Grizel whom he liked so much. As through a magnifying-glass he saw her top-heavy with remorse for life, unable to sleep of nights, crushed and—

He was not made of the stuff that could endure it. The truth must out. "Grizel," he said, impulsively, "you have nothing to be sorry for. You were quite right. I did not hurt my foot that night in the den, but afterwards, when I was alone, before the doctor came. I ricked it here,

intentionally, in the door. It sounds incredible, but I set my teeth and did it, Grizel, because you had challenged me to a duel, and I would not give in."

As soon as it was out he was proud of himself for having the generosity to confess it. He looked at Grizel expectantly.

Yes, it sounded incredible, and yet she saw that it was true. As Elspeth returned at that moment Grizel could say nothing, she stood looking at him only over her high collar of fur. Tommy actually thought that she was admiring him.

CHAPTER VIII

WHAT GRIZEL'S EYES SAID



O be the admired of women, how Tommy had fought for it since first he drank of them in Pym's sparkling pages! To some it seems to be easy, but to him it was a labor of Sisyphus. Everything had been against him. But he concentrated. No labor was too herculean; he was prepared if necessary to walk round the world to get to the other side of the wall across which some men can step. And he did take a roundabout way. It is my opinion, for instance, that he wrote his book in order to make a beginning with the ladies.

That as it may be, at all events he is on the right side of the wall now, and here is even Grizel looking wistfully at him. Had she admired him for something he was not (and a good many of them did that) he would have been ill-satisfied; he wanted her to think him splendid because he was splendid, and the more he reflected the more clearly he saw that he had done a big thing. How many men would have had the courage to rack their foot as he had done? (He shivered when he thought of it.) And even of these Spartans how many would have let the reward slip through their fingers rather than wound the feelings of a girl? These had not been his thoughts when he made confession, he had spoken on an impulse, but now that he could step out and have a look at himself, he saw that this made it a still bigger thing. He

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was modestly pleased that he had got not only Grizel's admiration but earned it, and he was very kind to her when next she came to see him. No one could be more kind to them than he when they admired him. He had the most grateful heart, had our Tommy.

When next she came to see him! That was while his ankle still nailed him to the chair, a fortnight or so during which Tommy was at his best, sending gracious messages by Elspeth to the many who called to inquire, and writing hard at his new work, pad on knee, so like a brave soul whom no unmerited misfortune could subdue, that it would have done you good merely to peep at him through the window. Grizel came several times, and the three talked very ordinary things, mostly reminiscences; she was as much a plain-spoken princess as ever, but often he found her eyes fixed on him wistfully, and he knew what they were saying, they spoke so eloquently that he was a little nervous lest Elspeth should notice. It was delicious to Tommy to feel that there was this little unspoken something between him and Grizel; he half regretted that the time could not be far distant when she must put it into words, as soon, say, as Elspeth left the room, an exquisite moment no doubt, but it would be the plucking of the flower.

Don't think that Tommy conceived Grizel to be in love with him. On my sacred honor, that would have horrified him.

Curiously enough she did not take the first opportunity Elspeth gave her of telling him in words how much she admired his brave confession. She was so honest that he expected her to begin the moment the door closed, and now that the artistic time had come for it he wanted it, but no. He was not hurt, but he wondered at her shyness and cast about for the reason; he cast far back into the past, and caught a little girl who had worn this same wistful face when she admired him most. He compared those two faces of the anxious girl and the serene woman, and in the wistfulness that sometimes lay on them both they looked alike. Was it possible that the fear of him which the years had driven out of the girl still lived a ghost's life to haunt the woman?

At once he overflowed with pity. As a

boy he had exulted in Grizel's fear of him, as a man he could feel only the pain of it. There was no one, he thought, less to be dreaded of a woman than he—oh, so sure Tommy was of that! And he must lay this ghost, he gave his whole heart to the laying of it.

Few men, and never a woman, could do a fine thing so delicately as he, but of course it included a divergence from the truth, for to Tommy afloat on a generous scheme the truth was a buoy marking sunken rocks. She had feared him in her childhood, as he knew well; he therefore proceeded to prove to her that she had never feared him, she had thought him masterful, and all his reminiscences now went to show that it was she who had been the masterful one.

"You must often laugh now," he said, "to remember how I feared you. The memory of it makes me afraid of you still. I assure you I joukit back, as Corp would say, that day I saw you in church. It was the instinct of self-preservation. 'Here comes Grizel to lord it over me again,' I heard something inside me saying. You called me masterful, and yet I had always to give in to you. That shows what a gentle, yielding girl you were, and what a masterful character I was!"

His intention, you see, was, without letting Grizel know what he was at, to make her think he had forgotten certain unpleasant incidents in their past, so that seeing they were no longer anything to him, they might the sooner become nothing to her. And she believed that he had forgotten and she was glad. She smiled when he told her to go on being masterful, for old acquaintance had made him like it. Hers, indeed, was a masterful nature, she could not help it; and if the time ever came when she must help it, the glee of living would be gone from her.

She did continue to be masterful, to a greater extent than Tommy, thus nobly behaving, was prepared for, and his shock came to him at the very moment when he was modestly expecting to receive the prize. She had called when Elspeth happened to be out, and though now able to move about the room with the help of a staff he was still an interesting object. He saw that she thought so, and perhaps it made him hobble slightly more, not

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vaingloriously, but because he was such an artist. He ceased to be an artist suddenly, however, when Grizel made this unexpected remark :

“ How vain you are ! ”

Tommy sat down, quite pale. “ Did you come here to say that to me, Grizel ? ” he inquired, and she nodded frankly over her high collar of fur. He knew it was true as Grizel said it, but though taken aback he could bear it, for she was looking wistfully at him, and he knew well what Grizel’s wistful look meant ; so long as women admired him Tommy could bear anything from them. “ God knows I have little to be vain of,” he said, humbly.

“ Those are the people who are most vain,” she replied, and he laughed a short laugh, which surprised her, she was so very serious.

“ Your methods are so direct,” he explained. “ But of what am I vain, Grizel ? Is it my book ? ”

“ No,” she answered, “ not about your book but about meaner things ; what else could have made you dislocate your ankle rather than admit that you had been rather silly ? ”

Now silly is no word to apply to a gentleman, and despite his forgiving nature, Tommy was a little disappointed in Grizel.

“ I suppose it was a silly thing to do,” he said, with just a touch of stiffness.

“ It was an ignoble thing,” said she, sadly.

“ I see. And I myself am the meaner thing than the book, am I ? ”

“ Are you not ? ” she asked, so eagerly that he laughed again.

“ It is the first compliment you have paid my book,” he pointed out.

“ I like the book very much,” she answered, gravely ; “ no one can be more proud of your fame than I. You are hurting me very much by pretending to think that it is a pleasure to me to find fault with you.”

There was no getting past the honesty of her, and he was touched by it. Besides, she did admire him, and that, after all, is the great thing. “ Then why say such things, Grizel ? ” he replied, good-naturedly.

“ But if they are true ? ”

“ Still let us avoid them,” said he, and at that she was most distressed.

“ It is so like what you used to say when you were a boy ! ” she cried.

“ You are so anxious to have me grow up,” he replied, with proper dolefulness. “ If you like the book, Grizel, you must have patience with the kind of thing that produced it. That night in the den when I won your scorn, I was in the preliminary stages of composition. At such times an author should be locked up, but I had got out, you see. I was so enamoured of my little fancies that I forgot I was with you. No wonder you were angry.”

“ I was not angry with you for forgetting me,” she said, sharply. (There was no catching Grizel, however artful you were.) “ But you were sighing to yourself, you were looking as tragic as if some dreadful calamity had occurred——”

“ The idea that had suddenly come to me was a touching one,” he said.

“ But you looked triumphant, too.”

“ That was because I saw I could make something of it.”

“ Why did you walk as if you were lame ? ”

“ The man I was thinking of,” Tommy explained, “ had broken his leg. I don’t mind telling you that it was Corp.”

He ought to have minded telling her, for it could add only to her indignation, but he was too conceited to give weight to that.

“ Corp’s leg was not broken,” said practical Grizel.

“ I broke it for him,” replied Tommy, and, when he had explained, her eyes accused him of heartlessness.

“ If it had been my own,” he said, in self-defence, “ it should have gone crack just the same.”

“ Poor Gavinia ! Had you no feeling for her ? ”

“ Gavinia was not there,” Tommy replied, triumphantly. “ She had run off with a soldier.”

“ You dared to conceive that ? ”

“ It helped.”

Grizel stamped her foot. “ You could take away dear Gavinia’s character with a smile ! ”

“ On the contrary,” said Tommy, “ my heart bled for her. Did you not notice that I was crying ? ” But he could not

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make Grizel smile, so to please her he said, with a smile that was not very sincere, "I wish I were different, but that is how ideas come to me, at least all those that are of any value."

"Surely you could fight against them, and drive them away?"

This to Tommy, who held out sugar to them to lure them to him! But still he treated her with consideration.

"That would mean my giving up writing altogether, Grizel," he said, kindly.

"Then why not give it up?"

Really! But she admired him, and still he bore with her.

"I don't like the book," she said, "if it is written at such a cost."

"People say the book has done them good, Grizel."

"What does that matter if it does you harm?" In her eagerness to persuade him her words came pell-mell. "If writing makes you live in such an unreal world it must do you harm. I see now what Mr. Cathro meant long ago when he called you Senti——"

Tommy winced. "I remember what Mr. Cathro called me," he said, with surprising hauteur for such a good-natured man. "But he does not call me that now. No one calls me that now except you, Grizel."

"What does that matter," she replied, distressfully, "if it is true? In the definition of sentimentality in the dictionary——"

He rose, indignantly. "You have been looking me up in the dictionary, have you, Grizel?"

"Yes, the night you told me you had hurt your ankle intentionally."

He laughed without mirth now. "I thought you had put that down to vanity."

"I think," she said, "it was vanity that gave you the courage to do it," and he liked one word in this remark.

"Then you do give me credit for a little courage?"

"I think you could do the most courageous things," she told him, "so long as there was no real reason why you should do them."

It was a shot that rang the bell; oh, our Tommy heard it ringing. But to do him justice he bore no malice, he was proud, rather, of Grizel's marksmanship. "At

least," he said, meekly, "it was courageous of me to tell you the truth in the end?" but to his surprise she shook her head.

"No," she replied, "it was sweet of you. You did it impulsively because you were sorry for me, and I think it was sweet. But impulse is not courage."

So now Tommy knew all about it. His plain-spoken critic had been examining him with a candle and had paid particular attention to his defects, but against them she set the fact that he had done something chivalrous for her, and it held her heart though the others were in possession of the head. How like a woman! he thought with a pleased smile. He knew them.

Still he was chagrined that she made so little of his courage, and it was to stab her that he said, with subdued bitterness, "I always had a suspicion that I was that sort of person, and it is pleasant to have it pointed out by one's oldest friend. No one will ever accuse you of want of courage, Grizel."

She was looking straight at him, and her eyes did not drop, but they looked still more wistful. Tommy did not understand the courage that made her say what she had said, but he knew he was hurting her, he knew that if she was too plain-spoken it was out of loyalty, and that to wound Grizel because she had to speak her mind was a shame, yes, he always knew that.

But he could do it, he could even go on, "And it is satisfactory that you have thought me out so thoroughly, because you will not need to think me out any more. You know me now, Grizel, and can have no more fear of me."

"When was I ever afraid of you?" she demanded. She was looking at him suspiciously now.

"Never as a girl?" he asked. It jumped out of him; he was sorry as soon as he had said it.

There was a long pause. "So you remembered it all the time," she said, quietly. "You have been making pretence—— again!"

He asked her to forgive him, and she nodded her head at once. "But why did you pretend to have forgotten?"

"I thought it would please you, Grizel."

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"Why should pretence please me?" She rose suddenly in a white heat, "You don't mean to say that you think I am afraid of you still?"

He said No a moment too late. He knew it was too late.

"Don't be angry with me, Grizel," he begged her, earnestly, "I am so glad I was mistaken, it made me miserable, I have been a terrible blunderer, but I mean well, I misread your eyes."

"My eyes?"

"They have always seemed to be watching me, and often there was such a wistful look in them, it reminded me of the past."

"You thought I was still afraid of you! Say it," said Grizel, stamping her foot, but he would not say it. It was not merely fear that he thought he had seen in her eyes, you remember. This was still his comfort, and I suppose it gave the touch of complacency to his face that made Grizel merciless. She did not mean to be merciless, but only to tell the truth. If some of her words were scornful, there was sadness in her voice all the time instead of triumph. "For years and years," she said, standing straight as an elvint, "I have been able to laugh at all the ignorant fears of my childhood, and if you don't know why I have watched you and been unable to help watching you since you came back, I shall tell you. But I think you might have guessed, you who write books about women. It is because I liked you when you were a boy, you were often horrid, but you were my first friend when every other person was against me; you let me play with you when no other boy or girl would let me play, and so all the time you have been away I have been hoping that you were growing into a noble man, and when you came back I watched to see whether you were the noble man I wanted you so much to be, and you are not. Do you see now why my eyes look wistful? It is because I wanted to admire you, and I can't."

She went away, and the great authority on women raged about the room. Oh, but he was galled! There had been five feet nine of him, but he was shrinking. By and by the red light came into his eyes.

CHAPTER IX

GALLANT BEHAVIOR OF T. SANDYS



HERE were now no fewer than three men engaged, each in his own way, in the siege of Grizel, nothing in common between them except insulted vanity. One was a broken fellow who took for granted that she preferred to pass him by in the street; his bow was also an apology to her for his existence; he not only knew that she thought him wholly despicable but agreed with her; in the long ago (yesterday, for instance) he had been happy, courted, esteemed, he had even esteemed himself, and so done useful work in the world, but she had flung him to earth so heavily that he had made a hole in it out of which he could never climb; there he lay damned, hers the glory of destroying him; he hoped she was proud of her handiwork. That was one Thomas Sandys, the one perhaps who put on his clothes in the morning, but it might be number two who took them off at night. He was a good-natured cynic, vastly amused by the airs this little girl put on before a man of note, and he took a malicious pleasure in letting her see that they entertained him. He goaded her intentionally into expressions of temper because she looked prettiest then, and trifled with her hair (but this was in imagination only) and called her a quaint child (but this was beneath his breath). The third—he might be the one who wore the clothes—was a haughty boy who was not only done with her forever but meant to let her see it. (His soul cried, O, O for a conservatory and some of society's darlings, and Grizel at the window to watch how I get on with them!) And now that I think of it there was also a fourth, Sandys the grave author, whose life in two vols. 8vo I ought at this moment to be writing, without a word about the other Tommies. They amused him a good deal. When they were doing something big he would suddenly appear and take a note of it.

The boy, who was stiffly polite to her (when Tommy was angry he became very

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polite), told her that he had been invited to the Spittal, the seat of the Rintoul family, and that he understood there were some charming girls there.

"I hope you will like them," Grizel said, pleasantly.

"If you could see how they will like me!" he wanted to reply, but of course he could not, and unfortunately there was no one by to say it for him. Tommy often felt this want of a secretary.

The abject one found a glove of Grizel's that she did not know she had lost and put it in his pocket. There it lay without her knowledge. He knew that he must not even ask them to bury it with him in his grave. This was a little thing to ask, but too much for him. He saw his effects being examined after all that was mortal of T. Sandys had been consigned to earth, and this pathetic little glove coming to light. Ah, then, then Grizel would know! By the way what would she have known? I am sure I cannot tell you. Nor could Tommy, forced to face the question in this vulgar way, have told you; yet whatever it was it gave him some moist moments. If Grizel saw him in this mood her reproachful look implied that he was sentimentalizing again. How little this chit understood him.

The man of the world sometimes came upon the glove in his pocket and laughed at it as such men do when they recall their callow youth. He took walks with Grizel without her knowing that she accompanied him, or rather, he let her come, she was so eager. In his imagination (for bright were the dreams of Thomas!) he saw her looking longingly after him, just as the dog looks, and then not being really a cruel man, he would call over his shoulder, "Put on your hat, little woman; you can come." Then he conceived her wandering with him through the den and Caddam wood, clinging to his arm and looking up adoringly at him. "What a loving little soul it is!" he said, and pinched her ear, whereat she glowed with pleasure. "But I forgot," he would add, bantering her, "you don't admire me; heigho, Grizel wants to admire me, but she can't!" He got some satisfaction out of these flights of fancy, but it had a scurvy way of deserting him in the hour of greatest need; where was it, for in-

stance, when the real Grizel appeared and fixed that inquiring eye on him?

He went to the Spittal several times, Elspeth with him when she cared to go, for Lady Rintoul and all the others had to learn and remember that, unless they made much of Elspeth, there could be no T. Sandys for them. He glared at anyone, male or female, who on being introduced to Elspeth did not remain, obviously impressed, by her side. "Give pleasure to Elspeth or away I go," was written all over him, and it had to be the right kind of pleasure too, the ladies must feel that she was more innocent than they, and talk accordingly. He would walk the flower-garden with none of them until he knew for certain that the man walking it with little Elspeth was a person to be trusted. Once he was convinced of this, however, he was very much at their service, and so little to be trusted himself that perhaps they should have had careful brothers also. He told them one at a time that they were strangely unlike all the other women he had known, and held their hands a moment longer than was absolutely necessary, and then went away, leaving them and him a prey to conflicting and puzzling emotions.

Lord Rintoul, whose hair was so like his skin that in the family portraits he might have been painted in one color, could never rid himself of the feeling that it must be a great thing to a writing chap to get a good dinner, but her ladyship always explained him away with an apologetic smile which went over his remarks like a piece of india-rubber, so that in the end he had never said anything. She was a slight, pretty woman of nearly forty and liked Tommy because he remembered so vividly her coming to the Spittal as a bride. He even remembered how she had been dressed, her white bonnet, for instance.

"For long," Tommy said, musing, "I resented other women in white bonnets: it seemed profanation."

"How absurd!" she told him, laughing. "You must have been quite a small boy at the time."

"But with a lonely boy's passionate admiration for beautiful things," he answered, and his gravity was a gentle rebuke to her. "It was all a long time ago," he

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said, taking both her hands in his, "but I never forget, and, dear lady, I have often wanted to thank you." What he was thanking her for is not precisely clear, but she knew that the artistic temperament is an odd sort of thing, and from this time Lady Rintoul liked Tommy and even tried to find the right wife for him among the families of the surrounding clergy. His step was sometimes quite springy when he left the Spittal, but Grizel's shadow was always waiting for him somewhere on the way home to take the life out of him, and after that it was again, O sorrowful disillusion, O, world gone gray. Grizel did not admire him, T. Sandys was no longer a wonder to Grizel. He went home to that as surely as the laborer to his evening platter.

To have Grizel admire him again! what monstrous things he would have done for it, what a monstrous thing he did.

Corp had got a holiday, and they were off together fishing the Drumly Water, by Lord Rintoul's permission. They had fished the Drumly many a time without it, and this was to be another such day as those of old; the one who woke at four was to rouse the other. Never had either waked at four, but one of them was married now, and any woman can wake at any hour she chooses, so at four Corp was pushed out of bed and soon thereafter they took the road. Grizel's blinds were already up. "Do you mind," Corp said, "how often when we had boasted we were to start at four and didna get roaded till six, we wriggled by that window so that Grizel shouldna see us?"

"She usually did see us," Tommy replied, ruefully. "Grizel always spotted us, Corp, when we had anything to hide, and missed us when we were anxious to be seen."

"There was no jouking her," said Corp. "Do you mind how that used to bother you?" a senseless remark to a man whom it was bothering still, or shall we say to a boy, for the boy came back to Tommy when he heard the Drumly singing; it was as if he had suddenly seen his mother looking young again. There had been a thunder-shower as they drew near, followed by a rush of wind that pinned them to a dyke, swept the road bare, banged every door in the

glen, and then sank suddenly as if it had never been, like a mole in the sand. But now the sun was out, every fence and farm-yard rope was a string of diamond drops, there was one to every blade of grass, they lurked among the wild roses, larks drunken with their song shook them from their wings, the whole earth shone so gloriously with them that for a time Tommy ceased to care whether he was admired. We can pay nature no higher compliment.

But when they came to the Slugs!—The Slugs of Kenny is a wild crevice through which the Drumly cuts its way, black and treacherous, into a lonely glade where it gambols for the rest of its short life; you would not believe to see it laughing that it had so lately escaped from prison. To the Slugs they made their way, not to fish, for any trout that are there are thinking forever of the way out and of nothing else, but to eat their luncheon, and they ate it sitting on the mossy stones their persons had long ago helped to smooth and looking at a rowan branch, which now, as then, was trailing in the water.

There were no fish to catch, but there was a boy trying to catch them. He was on the opposite bank, had crawled down it, only other boys can tell how, a bare-footed urchin of ten or twelve with an enormous bagful of worms hanging from his jacket-button. To put a new worm on the hook without coming to destruction he first twisted his legs about a young birch and put his arms round it. He was after a big one, he informed Corp, though he might as well have been fishing in a treatise on the art of angling.

Corp exchanged pleasantries with him, told him that Tommy was Captain Ure, and that he was his faithful servant Alexander Bett, both of Edinburgh. Since the birth of his child, Corp had become something of a humorist. Tommy was not listening. As he lolled in the sun he was turning, without his knowledge, into one of the other Tommies. Let us watch the process.

He had found a half-fledged mavis lying dead among the grass. Remember also how the larks had sung after rain.

Tommy lost sight and sound of Corp and the boy. What he seemed to see was

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a baby lark that had got out of its nest sideways, a fall of half a foot only, but a dreadful drop for a baby. "You can get back this way," its mother said, and showed it the way, which was quite easy, but when the baby tried to leap, it fell on its back. Then the mother marked out lines on the ground from one to the other of which it was to practise hopping, and soon it could hop beautifully so long as its mother was there to say every moment, "How beautifully you hop." "Now teach me to hop up," the little lark said, meaning that it wanted to fly, and the mother tried to do that also, but in vain; she could soar up, up, up bravely, but could not explain how she did it. This distressed her very much, and she thought hard about how she had learned to fly long ago last year, but all she could recall for certain was that you suddenly do it. "Wait till the sun comes out after rain," she said, half remembering. "What is sun, what is rain?" the little bird asked; "if you cannot teach me to fly, teach me to sing." "When the sun comes out after rain," the mother replied, "then you will know how to sing." The rain came, and glued the little bird's wings together. "I shall never be able to fly nor to sing," it wailed. Then of a sudden it had to blink its eyes, for a glorious light had spread over the world, catching every leaf and twig and blade of grass in tears and putting a smile into every tear. The baby bird's breast swelled, it did not know why; and it fluttered from the ground, it did not know how. "The sun has come out after the rain," it trilled, "thank you, sun, thank you, thank you, O, mother, did you hear me, I can sing!" And it floated up, up, up, crying "Thank you, thank you, thank you!" to the sun, "O mother, do you see me, I am flying!" and being but a baby it soon was gasping, but still it trilled the same ecstasy, and when it fell panting to earth it still trilled, and the distracted mother called to it to take breath or it would die, but it could not stop. "Thank you, thank you, thank you!" it sang to the sun till its little heart burst.

With filmy eyes Tommy searched himself for the little pocket-book in which he took notes of such sad thoughts as these, and in place of the book he found a glove wrapped in silk paper. He sat there with it in his hand, nodding his

head over it so broken-heartedly you could not have believed that he had forgotten it for several days.

Death was still his subject, but it was no longer a bird he saw, it was a very noble young man, and his white dead face stared at the sky from the bottom of a deep pool. I don't know how he got there, but a woman who would not admire him had something to do with it. No sun after rain had come into that tragic life; to the water that had ended it his white face seemed to be saying, "Thank you, thank you, thank you." It was the old story of a faithless woman. He had given her his heart and she had played with it. For her sake he had striven to be famous, for her alone had he toiled through dreary years in London, the goal her lap in which he should one day place his book, a poor trivial little work he knew (yet much admired by the best critics); never had his thoughts wandered for one instant of that time to another woman, he had been as faithful in life as in death, and now she came to the edge of the pool and peered down at his staring eyes and laughed.

He had got thus far when a shout from Corp brought him, dazed, to his feet. It had been preceded by another cry as the boy and the sapling he was twisted round toppled into the river together, uprooted stones and clods pounding after them and discoloring the pool into which the torrent rushes between rocks, to swirl frantically before it dives down a narrow channel and leaps into another cauldron.

There was no climbing down those precipitous rocks. Corp was shouting, gesticulating, impotent. "How can you stand so still?" he roared.

For Tommy was standing quite still, like one not yet thoroughly awake. The boy's head was visible now and again as he was carried round in the seething water; when he came to the outer ring down that channel he must infallibly go, and every second or two he was in a wider circle.

Tommy, who could not swim, kicked off his boots.

"You wouldna dare!" Corp cried, aghast.

I am sure Tommy had no intention of daring, he was merely putting off the decision for a moment. But the action had

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its momentary effect, turning him suddenly into one of those heroes of Pym, who had so often kicked off their boots and dived, "Very well, Grizel, you shall admire me now!"

He flung off his coat, and as there was nothing more to do but leap, this was bringing him to his senses, when he saw the glove, now clutched in his hands. "Give her that," he said, handing it to Corp, but forgetting to mention the lady's name, "and tell her it never left my heart." This was so unexpected that it did for Tommy; overcome by the splendor of the sentiment he shut his eyes and jumped. Corp saw him strike the water and disappear, he tore along the bank as he had never run before, until he got to the water's edge below the Slugs and climbed and fought his way to the scene of the disaster. Before he reached it, however, we should have had no hero had not the sapling, the cause of all this pother, made amends by barring the way down the narrow channel. Tommy was clinging to it and the boy to him, and at some risk Corp got them both ashore, where they lay gasping like fish in a creel.

The boy was the first to rise, to look for his fishing-rod, and he was surprised to find no six-pounder at the end of it. "She has broke the line again!" he said, for he was sure then and ever afterward that a big one had pulled him in.

Corp slapped him for his ingratitude, but the man who had saved this boy's life wanted no thanks. "Off to your home with you, wherever it is," he said to the boy, who obeyed silently, and then to Corp, "He is a little fool, Corp, but not such a fool as I am." He lay on his face shivering, not from cold, not from shock, but in a horror of himself. I think Tommy saw himself more clearly than ever before; for long he had wondered, but half jocularly, to what lengths a sentimental impulse might carry him, and now he knew. It was not water that he tried to shake fiercely from him when he rose, it was the monstrous part of him that had done this deed, and I suppose he really did think before he reached home that he had left it to rot on the banks of the Drumly. It was only after many such struggles for freedom that he could laugh grimly at them, knowing even while he

fought that the wrestle must turn into an embrace.

They lit a fire among the rocks at which he sought to dry his clothes, and then they set out for home, Corp doing all the talking. "What a town there will be about this in Thrums!" was his text, and he was surprised when Tommy at last broke silence by saying, passionately, "Never speak about this to me again, Corp, as long as you live. Promise me that. Promise never to mention it to anyone. I want no one to know what I did to-day, and no one ever will know unless you tell; the boy can't tell, for we are strangers to him."

"He thinks you are a Captain Ure and that I'm Alexander Bett, his servant," said Corp. "I telled him that for a divert."

"Then let him continue to think that."

Of course Corp promised. "And I'll go to the stake afore I break my promise," he swore, happily remembering one of the Jacobite oaths, but he was puzzled. They would have made so much of Tommy had they known. They would think him a wonder. Did he not want that?

"No," Tommy replied.

"You used to like it; you used to like it most mighty."

"I have changed."

"Ay, you have; but since when? Since you took to making printed books?"

Tommy did not say, but it was more recently than that. What he was foregoing no one could have needed to be told less than he; the magnitude of the sacrifice was what enabled him to make it; he was always at home among the superlatives, it was the little things that bothered him. In his present fear of the ride that his old man of the sea might yet goad him to, he craved for mastery over self, he seemed to get it by declining the glory for which he had so nearly flung away his life.

His self-punishment was like refusing a crown, and Tommy knew it and was thankful. Grizel would never know how strong a man he was; well, now that he knew it himself, he could bear that also. There was even a certain piquancy in the situation. He saw himself submitting to her reproaches with a brave smile.

Thus he reached home, a rider with control of the reins at last. No more sentiment for Tommy.

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CHAPTER X

GAVINIA ON THE TRACK



ORP, you remember, had said that he would go to the stake rather than break his promise, and he meant it too, though what the stake was and why such a pother about going to it, he did not know. He was to learn now, however, for to the stake he had to go. This was because Gavinia when folding up his clothes found in one of the pockets a glove wrapped in silk paper.

Tommy had forgotten it until too late, for when he asked Corp for the glove it was already in Gavinia's possession, and she had declined to return it without an explanation. "You must tell her nothing," Tommy said, sternly; he was uneasy, but relieved to find that Corp did not know whose glove it was, nor even why gentlemen carry a lady's glove in their pocket.

At first Gavinia was mildly curious only, but her husband's refusal to answer any questions roused her dander. She tried cajolery, fried his take of trout deliciously for him, and he sat down to them sniffing. They were small, and the remainder of their brief career was in two parts. First he lifted them by the tail, then he laid down the tail. But not a word about the glove.

She tried tears. "Dinna greet, woman," he said in distress; "what would the bairn say if he kent I made you greet!"

Gavinia went on greeting, and the baby, waking up, promptly took her side.

"D—n the thing!" said Corp.

"Your ain bairn!"

"I meant the glove," he roared.

It was curiosity only that troubled Gavinia. A reader of romance, as you may remember, she had encountered in the printed page a score of ladies who on finding such parcels in their husbands' pockets left their homes at once and forever, and she had never doubted but that it was the only course to follow, such is the power of the writer of fiction. But when the case was her own she was merely curious; such are the limitations of the

writer of fiction. That there was a woman in it she did not believe for a moment. This of course did not prevent her saying, with a sob, "Wha is the woman?"

With great earnestness Corp assured her that there was no woman. He even proved it. "Just listen to reason, Gavinia. If I was sich a black as to be chief wi' ony woman, and she wanted to gie me a present, weel, she might gie me a pair o' gloves, but one glove, what use would one glove be to me? I tell you if a woman had the impidence to gie me one glove, I would fling it in her face."

Nothing could have been clearer, and he had put it thus considerately because when a woman, even the shrewdest of them, is excited (any man knows this) one has to explain matters to her as simply and patiently as if she were a four-year-old, yet Gavinia affected to be unconvinced, and for several days she led Corp the life of a lodger in his own house.

"Hands off that poor innocent," she said when he approached the baby.

If he reproved her she replied, meekly, "What can you expect frae a woman that doesna wear gloves?"

To the baby she said, "He despises you, my bonny, because you hae no gloves, ay, that's what maks him turn up his nose at you, but your mother is fond o' you, gloves or no gloves."

She told the baby the story of the glove daily, with many monstrous additions.

When Corp came home from his work she said that a poor love-lorn female had called with a boot for him and a request that he should carry it in the pocket of his Sabbath breeks.

Worst of all, she listened to what he said in the night. Corp had a habit of talking in his sleep. He was usually taking the tickets at such times, and it had been her custom to stop him violently, but now she changed her tactics, she encouraged him. "I would be lying in my bed," he said to Tommy, "dreaming that a man had fallen into the Slugs, and instead o' trying to save him I cried out 'Tickets there, all tickets ready,' and first he hands me a glove and neist he hands me a boot and havers o' that kind sich as onybody dreams, but in the middle o' my dream it comes ower me that I had better waken up to see what Gavinia's doing, and I

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open my een, and there she is, sitting up, hearkening avidly to my every word and putting sly questions to me about the glove."

"What glove?" Tommy asked, coldly.

"The glove in silk paper."

"I never heard of it," said Tommy.

Corp sighed. "No," he said, loyally, "neither did I," and he went back to the station and sat gloomily in a wagon. He got no help from Tommy, not even when rumors of the incident at the Slugs became noised abroad.

"A'body kens about the laddie now," he said.

"What laddie?" Tommy inquired.

"Him that fell into the Slugs."

"Ah, yes," Tommy said, "I have just been reading about it in the paper. A plucky fellow, this Captain Ure who saved him. I wonder who he is."

"I wonder!" Corp said, with a groan.

"There was an Alexander Bett with him, according to the papers," Tommy went on. "Do you know any Bett?"

"It's no a Thrums name," Corp replied, thankfully, "I just made it up."

"What do you mean?" Tommy asked, blankly.

Corp sighed, and went back again to the wagon. He was particularly truculent that evening when the six o'clock train came in. "Tickets there, look slippy wi' your tickets." His head bobbed up at the window of another compartment, "Tick——" he began and then he ducked.

The compartment contained a boy, looking as scared as if he had just had his face washed, and an old woman who was clutching a large linen bag as if ex-

pecting some scoundrel to appear through the floor and grip it. With her other hand she held on to the boy, and being unused to travel they were both sitting very self-conscious, humble and defiant, like persons in church who have forgotten to bring their Bible. The general effect, however, was lost on Corp, for whom it was enough that in one of them he recognized the boy of the Slugs. He thought he had seen the old lady before also, but he could not give her a name. It was quite a relief to him to notice that she was not wearing gloves.

He heard her inquiring for one Alexander Bett and being told that there was no such person in Thrums. "He's married on a woman of the name of Gavinia," said the old lady, and then they directed her to the house of the only Gavinia in the place. With dark forebodings Corp skulked after her. He remembered who she was now. She was the old woman with the nut-cracker face on whom he had cried in more than a year ago to say that Gavinia was to have him. Her mud cottage had been near the Slugs. Yes, and this was the boy who had been supping porridge with her. Corp guessed rightly that the boy had remembered his unlucky visit. "I'm doomed!" Corp muttered to himself, pronouncing it in another way.

The woman, the boy, and the bag entered the house of Gavinia and presently she came out with them. She was looking very important and terrible. They went straight to Ailie's cottage, and Corp was wondering why, when he suddenly remembered that Tommy was to be there at tea to-day.

(To be continued.)



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